

**ANTI-
CALIFORNIA:**

**REPORT
FROM OUR
FIRST
PARAFASCIST
STATE**

**KENNETH
LAMOTT**

Something is happening to America's Golden State.

In La Jolla, San Diego and Golden Gate Park, in Marin County and in Watts, in Palo Alto and Oakland, the symptoms have become ugly and obvious —

State leaders make a mockery of the democratic process. Open warfare is waged against the dissident youth of the state. One-third of the population earns a living manufacturing bombs, missiles, napalm, and rockets. The educational system is rent by political pressure and internal dissension. Blatant racism continues in a pattern which is centuries old. Acute alcoholism, drug addiction, mental illness, divorce and suicide scar private lives at a frequency which is sometimes twice the national average.

Is fascism a serious possibility? According to Kenneth Lamott, it is not only possible — it is here. What is worse, its presence in California — for years a reliable barometer of America's political and social temperament — clearly and undeniably predicts the future of every state in the union.

Anti-California is a lucid and eloquent analysis of conditions in this glorified and misunderstood state, a frightening report on its public corruption and private sickness. In it the voices of Ronald Reagan and Bobby Seale, S. I. Hayakawa and Mario Savio, Max Rafferty and Dr. William McGill mingle with those of the forgotten — the street people, San Quentin inmates, residents of San Francisco's Tenderloin, rebel priests and the quietly troubled who seek out every kind of therapy imaginable. Political and apathetic, violent and despairing, bitter and confused, they demand attention.

WITHDRAWN

BOOKS BY KENNETH LAMOTT

The Stockade

The White Sand of Shirahama

Chronicles of San Quentin

Who Killed Mister Crittenden?


The Bastille Day Parade

The Moneymakers: The Great Big New Rich in America

Anti-California: Report from Our First Parafascist State

Anti- California

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Anti- California

Report from Our First Parafascist State

Kenneth Lamott



Little, Brown and Company — Boston — Toronto

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FIRST EDITION

T05/71

Parts of this book first appeared, in somewhat different form, in
Horizon, the *New York Times Magazine*, *Harper's*, *West*, and *Contact*.

The author gratefully acknowledges permission to quote six lines from
"The Second Coming" from *Collected Poems* by William Butler Yeats.
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*Published simultaneously in Canada
by Little, Brown & Company (Canada) Limited*

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

I am only relating what I know, or have heard, or believe of the particular cases, and what fell within the compass of my view.

— Defoe, *Journal of the Plague Year*

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A California landscape. (Photo by the author).

One. Definitions

Although not an island, California has many of the characteristics of one.

— Raymond Dasmann

It is very easy to sit at the bar in, say, La Scala in Beverly Hills, or Ernie's in San Francisco, and to share in the pervasive delusion that California is only five hours from New York by air. The truth is that La Scala and Ernie's are only five hours from New York by air. California is somewhere else.

— Joan Didion

Californians strike me as so many lost souls, living in a land which looks like a tentative preface to extinction.

— Ashley Montagu

It is almost as if California had been created to demonstrate how boorishly and wantonly destructive human beings can be: a beautiful face on which the scars of a sadistic crime can show more vividly.

—Theodore Roszak

So laugh with joy, be blithe and gay,
Or weep, my friends, with sorrow —
What California is today
The rest will be tomorrow.

— Richard Armour

CHICKEN LITTLE WAS RIGHT

— Button seen at Berkeley

1. *Our First Parafascist State I*

I tried earnestly to avoid using the word "fascism" in the title of this book — it is an emotional word, an inflammatory word, a denunciatory word, a word of impossibly elastic definition — but in the end "fascism" forced itself upon me. For all its lack of precision, "fascism" is an irreplaceable word, conveying a sense of the methodical corruption of the public life as well as of the destruction of private lives. Yet, there is clearly a difference of kind as well as of degree between Germany in the 1930's and 1940's and California in the 1960's and 1970's. I have, consequently, chosen to coin the word "parafascism," drawing on the model of "paratyphoid," a similar but distinctly different variety of disease.

When fascism appears in the United States, it does not display itself in the forms that were familiar in the European experience. The American Nazi Party is distasteful but in the end pathetic and often simply funny. Our guard is always up in the wrong direction. We listen for the tramp of jackboots or the strains of the "Horst Wessel Song" and we hear instead the footfalls of National Guardsmen or the thud of pool cues against skulls as a rock band plays for an audience of a third of a million young people. We look around nervously for storm troopers and we see instead Hell's Angels and Birchers and the hard-hats. We await Mussolini and Hitler, but we get Ronald Reagan.

If the coming of fascism to California were all on this level, history would excuse us for not sounding the alarm in earnest. The Birchers are not enforcing Nuremberg Laws. The Hell's Angels are not operating death camps. Hippie communes resemble the Strength Through Joy camps only in ir-

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relevant details. The *Reaganjugend* has yet to be invented. National Guardsmen do not crush the testicles of their prisoners. Dissenting radicals are not often beaten to death on our streets.

We are a people different from the Germans, with different roots, different political styles, a different social physiology, and a different pathology. We are, furthermore, living forty years after the horrors of the 1930's and are touched by different currents of terror. Yet, there is something not entirely unfamiliar about what is going on in the United States today and, particularly, about what is going on in California.

The clichés about California have become clichés precisely because they are true. California *is* the distant warning system for the rest of the United States. California *is* our window into the future. California *is* the center of the whirlpool, where all the currents come to a focus. Reports from California *are* the minutes of the next meeting. What is going on here is not the super-urban nightmares of New York and Chicago, or the ancient slow rot of the South, or the death of the political spirit that is expiring painfully in Washington, D.C. What is going on here is, instead, something that is even more dismaying, the disintegration of a state that should have been the brightest and the best, the corruption of the Promised Land itself.

Here in California we are, to begin with, governed by charismatic buffoons, men so clownish it is hard to take them seriously as politicians, but men who are not reluctant to use their tremendous powers.

We are the garrison state preeminent, with a third of our people depending for their daily bread on the production of bombs, missiles, napalm, and all the other obscene items found in the modern catalog of death. In California, war is literally the health of the state.

We are engaged in open warfare against an internal enemy who is often described in terms that would have instructed Goebbels. (That enemy, of course, is our own young people.)

Our universities and colleges are being progressively debased both by corrosive internal dissension and by implacable political pressures.

Technology has triumphed here more completely than it has anywhere else, and we have become the bondservants of our machines.

These symptoms of public disorder are matched by an index of private distress that shows itself in our unparalleled drive toward self-destruction through suicide, drugs, alcohol, and meaningless sexual activity.

We are in a real sense a racist state, not only in the familiar confrontation of black and white but also in the continued and deliberate subjugation of the native Indians and the *chicanos*, or Mexican-Americans — who are treated both officially and unofficially as immigrants from an inferior culture, fit for stoop labor and restaurant work.*

Finally, the best of the middle generation of Californians suffer from that moral apathy that the Greeks called *anomia* and the medieval monks called “anomie.” Yeats’s “The Second Coming” has become the unacknowledged anthem of California’s middle-class liberals:

*Things fall apart; the center cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.*

Truth reveals itself more willingly in comedy than in tragedy, a phenomenon that is as true in Sacramento today as it

* The *chicanos*, who for more than a century have been California’s largest suppressed minority, are at last becoming visible as human beings, thanks partly to Cesar Chavez and his farm workers union and partly, as in the case of the blacks, to such tragedies as the riot in East Los Angeles in August 1970 in which the veteran newspaperman Ruben Salazar was killed by a tear gas projectile fired by a policeman.

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was on Mussolini's balcony in Rome. Such a comic revelation was granted us in May 1969, when a commission of wise men announced a new code of moral conduct for our young people.

Among these high counselors, who had been appointed by Dr. Rafferty in his capacity as superintendent of schools, were the Reverend Robert Williams, who ministers to the faithful at the Church of Reflection on Knott's Berry Farm in Orange County*; Dr. Hardin Jones, a right-wing professor from Berkeley (this is not a contradiction in terms); State Assemblyman E. Richard Barnes, a retired navy chaplain; two other conservative Republican state legislators; and the chairman, Edwin S. Klotz, an assistant of Rafferty's who is in his own right a noted fogleman of the Right.

This Great Sanhedrin of holy men and lawmakers, noting quite properly that "a moral crisis is sweeping the land and all aspects of American behavior are affected," proceeded in the classic fashion of crusaders to smite the enemy hip and thigh and then to prescribe its own formula for salvation. Not surprisingly, the hosts of wickedness turned out to include John Dewey, Charles Darwin, Margaret Mead, Ashley Montagu, the United Nations, the justices of the United States Supreme Court, the profession of psychiatry, and secular humanists generally ("a creeping cult"). By contrast, George Washington, William F. Buckley, Jr., Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Jefferson, J. Edgar Hoover, and the Lord God Jehovah were spoken of favorably.

Under the urging of the ex-chaplain, the Reverend Assemblyman Barnes, the committee recommended that the system of moral instruction inflicted upon recruits in the navy and marine corps be taken as a model by the state's public schools. In setting out their suggested guidelines, which even-

* I find in my notes the information that on Mother's Day 1962, Knott's Berry Farm served 15,889 old-fashioned chicken dinners, including 2,387 pies and 68,269 biscuits. This prosperity is unfortunate for the rest of us since the proprietor, Walter Knott, is a devoted supporter of bad causes.

tually ran to more than eighty pages, the committee also drew upon the Bible and two pious textbooks from the last century, whose titles were reported as *Cowdery's Moral Lessons* and *Willson's Readers*.

The report was received with hosannahs by the Board of Education. The Reverend Assemblyman appeared before the board to inform them that "these hippie types are seceding from their homeland, America." He went on to declare that "this is your opportunity to take a positive approach to the problem that would please millions of California parents." The Reverend Mr. Williams, who entered Holy Orders after a career in an oil company, took the chair to testify that "Even as a layman, I knew we had to get back to the basics, to reading, writing, and arithmetic. But I know now that without the moral instruction, the other will be lost in a war for the minds of men." Dr. Hardin Jones, the maverick Berkeley professor, noted in passing that "I'm not sure my university is of any net positive value to its students or to the people of this state."

The Board of Education was so moved by the proposed guidelines, supported as they were by this powerful testimony, that it not only accepted them by a unanimous vote but went the committee one better by inserting a rider noting that the theory of evolution was merely a theory and recommending that it accordingly be taught in tandem with the story of creation as told in Genesis. This addition, alas, was the contribution of Dr. John R. Ford, who is Mr. Reagan's black appointee to the Board of Education and who expressed his opinion that "It has been a great step in taking away from the sense of morality of our children by saying that God cannot do the things the Bible says he can do."

The response from grateful parents, teachers, and the public press was not quite what the board had hoped for and must have been a grievous disappointment to its members, for they retreated in shameful disorder. The chairman of the board weaseled around for a while with the notion that the

board had merely "received" the report rather than having "accepted" it. (Newspapermen reported differently.) A month after the board had either accepted or received the report, the chairman appointed one of the board's members, the Reverend Donn Moomaw, a one-time All American football player who is Mr. Reagan's spiritual adviser, to head a new committee to come up with a new set of guidelines. Looking over the committee, a veteran Sacramento reporter counted eight Protestants and one Jew, eight white men and two blacks, seven Southern Californians, and "not a recognizable liberal in the group." Mr. Moomaw explained, "I wanted a very responsible, representative committee, but not one so broad that it wouldn't have convictions."

Unfortunately for the annals of low comedy in California, the Moomaw committee has not come back into view with anything of the caliber of the original guidelines. At this writing, they are either still working or have quietly given up.

The point to be noted is that this buffoonery was not the work of a solemn but witless assembly of private citizens assembled at Knott's Berry Farm to sip fruit juices and denounce the miniskirt, but was the creation of California's governor, its superintendent of public instruction, and the state's highest educational policymaking body. Before Mr. Reagan's election in 1966 it simply could not have happened. This is the real corruption, the disintegration of words and ideas beyond the already liberal bounds for foolishness that exist in our traditions of public life.

I do not, incidentally, mean to suggest that we would have been spared this sort of demeaning nonsense if Pat Brown and his Democrats had won the election. What is going on in California is too complicated to be explained as a matter of Republicans versus Democrats. Still, the presence of Mr. Reagan's party in Sacramento has surely done nothing to slow up the process.

The theme of this book is that during the past ten or fifteen years the quality of life in California — both public life and

private life — has been undergoing a thoroughgoing change that has made itself evident in two steps. First has come the disintegration of the traditional forms of our society, and second has come a reorientation of our life in the style I have labeled parafascist. The first step of the process is, I think, far advanced; the second is, as I write, gathering momentum for its full impact upon us.

This twofold process is an exceedingly complex one, and I have chosen to describe it not by writing, for example, an anti-Reagan tract (Mr. Reagan is in any case a product rather than the creator of the parafascist state), but, instead, by building my argument around a series of personal depositions. During the past twenty years I have had the good fortune to be present when a number of interesting things were happening in California, both in a public way and in a private way. A year or so ago, I began to be aware of correspondences and common denominators that formed a sort of network among these experiences and that taken as a whole caused me profound dismay.

But, to paraphrase Mencken, because I am a Californian, I spend much of my time laughing. When I can't laugh, I am likely to fall into a state of black neurotic anxiety because it then seems to me plain that in the ancient contest between life and death, between Eros and Thanatos, California is in the process of opting for Thanatos and death.

This is the distilled essence of parafascism and the true horror.

*Two. Refugees and
Others*

A million centuries ago, when the great dinosaurs roamed the earth, this area was part of a vast inland sea, an arm of the Pacific. From the peaks of the Farallon land mass to the Sierra Nevada two hundred miles to the east, all of California lay beneath the ocean waiting to be born.

— Harold Gilliam

Know ye that on the right hand of the Indies there is an island called California, very near the terrestrial paradise and inhabited by black women without a single man among them and living in the manner of Amazons.

— García Rodríguez Ordóñez de Montalvo, 1510

Here [in California] if anywhere else in America, I seem to hear the coming footsteps of the muses.

— William Butler Yeats

We [Californians] shall develop a literature of our own, issue books which will be read wherever the English language is spoken, and maintain periodicals which will rank with those of the East and Europe.

— Henry George

. . . somehow the California writers — and this is true even of Steinbeck, the best equipped of them — do not seem to carry a weight proportionate to the bulk of their work.

— Edmund Wilson

It's kind of unnerving somehow to realize that [San Francisco's] prime contribution for the decade to our national culture may be limited to hippies and teats.

— William Gilkerson

If the tides of acid recede, there may be a revival of literacy and even literature. It will be like the first reptile who developed legs out of his gill slits and walked on land. Maybe someone will walk out of a North Beach john with a new graffito and turn it into an epic.

— Herbert Gold

There is already a wall going up around California. It is an elitist wall, a self-ghettoization, a wall of expertise and ease such as one finds around the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions in Santa Barbara. There rational men are trying to reconstruct Athenian society inside a political vacuum.

— Richard Elman

2. *Refugees*

Whenever any of my friends or neighbors have been obliged to move away from California and there has been a farewell party for them, the affair has turned into a sort of wake, with the unhappy couple protesting the cruel circumstances that are forcing them to live in Denver, or Minneapolis, or Philadelphia, or Chicago, or New York. Our litany of sympathy comes readily to the lips: how will you ever survive the ice and snow? And those dreadful summers, with the temperature up to ninety-seven degrees and the humidity not far behind! And the *people*!

All of which is true enough, except that there is also the evidence of those others who have left quietly, without protesting, almost shamefacedly, as if it were they who had failed and not California. They are true refugees, fleeing across the unguarded border for reasons they find hard to articulate but that are powerful enough to set them into motion against the great westward current of immigrants breasting the Sierra Nevada.

I have run into several of these refugees afterward — a handsome matron talking over drinks in her new house on an island in British Columbia, an editor writing from New York, an engineer met by chance in New England.

The matron said, "No, I'd never go back to California. I think it's a terrible place. All of these people rushing around and trying to be happy, and there just isn't anything there. There's nothing there at all. I hated it."

The editor wrote, "I miss a lot of things about California. You know, not having to own a heavy coat and a certain sense of ease and nothing being terribly structured, but, my

God, my life's here. Nobody's really serious about anything in California. I get most of my kicks out of my work. There isn't anything to *do* in California."

I found out only late at night after a number of drinks that the engineer was a refugee who'd lived for several years on the San Francisco peninsula. He said, "Toward the end we began to feel guilty about it. Here were all these people telling us how great everything was, and here we were, disliking it more and more. To tell you the truth, I didn't mind it nearly as much as my wife did. She never felt comfortable in Palo Alto. She just couldn't hack it. She was simply getting ready to break all up when we left. It's a beautiful place, you know, and after a while you begin to worry that with everybody else so happy, you must be the one who's nuts.

"How do I like it back here? Well, you can freeze your balls off in the winter and the summer's miserable, but we don't worry any more about going nuts."

As for myself, in spite of my increasing sense of acute discomfort at living in California, I remain here because in many ways I continue to love the place. I would not leave willingly, for I am too attached to this beautiful and terrifying land. And yet I have caught myself wondering if a German of liberal mind, troubled by what he knew was going on around him in the late 1930's did not find that his feeling for the lakes and forests and mountains of his homeland was heightened rather than lessened by the terrible contrast.

The comparison is perhaps overdrawn, but perhaps not by much.

3. *Don't Let Me Go like This*

The condemned men were kept on Death Row and never came near the schoolroom. This didn't mean that I didn't have murderers in my classes during the three years I taught high school subjects at San Quentin, but these prisoners were mostly men doing long stretches for murder in the second degree. As it turned out, however, one of my students did end up in the gas chamber.

Pierce was a tough young black man, quick to take offense and abrasive when he did. I was always a little wary of him because of the hostility that was so close to the surface. Some of his quality can be conveyed by saying that he was a premature Black Panther. One day, responding to something he'd said, I remarked that there were times when things were tough for all of us.

"Oh, shee-yit, man," he said. "Oh, shee-yit."

He grinned and dared me to make something of it. I shrugged and went on with whatever I was doing.

After Pierce didn't show up for class one day, I found out that he had become the chief suspect in the fatal shooting of a cab driver that had, of course, taken place some time before. He was taken out for trial, convicted, sentenced to death, and sent back to San Quentin, this time to Death Row. I didn't see him again but I found out about how he died from the reporters who covered the execution.

The gas chamber is in a corner of the outer walls of the prison, a few steps from the officers' mess hall and across the street from the employees' snack bar and barbershop. The reporters and the official witnesses come in from the street

side. The man who is going to die and his guards come from inside the walls. They bring him down in an elevator on the afternoon before the execution (which is usually at ten in the morning), and he spends the night in one of two deathwatch cells not far from the gas chamber.

Just before taking him out to be killed, the guards give the condemned man a fresh suit of clothes. He wears a white shirt and blue jeans without pockets, because pockets might collect fumes that would hurt the people handling his body. The chief medical officer tapes a stethoscope diaphragm to his chest, to be connected to a long tube after he has been strapped in the chair.

The condemned man walks barefoot between two guards from the deathwatch cell to the gas chamber. He is strapped down and the door is locked. (Once a man broke the straps and ran around inside. Guards had to go in, catch him, and strap him down again.) When the executioner pulls a red lever, a rod rotates, causing a cheesecloth bag of cyanide pellets to drop into a container of sulfuric acid. The reaction in the vat generates hydrocyanic acid gas. It takes longer to die than you might expect. (It took nine minutes before Caryl Chessman was pronounced dead.)

The only thing that went wrong with Pierce's execution was that he declined to follow the script. Most condemned men — Chessman, for instance — go quietly, which is all we ask of somebody we are killing, but Pierce didn't go quietly at all. As the Protestant minister was blessing him, he took out a fragment of broken mirror he had somehow managed to hang on to and cut a three-inch gash across his throat. His blood was staining his white shirt as he was dragged, clawing, kicking, and shrieking into the chamber.

The witnesses heard Pierce cry, "I'm innocent, God, you know I'm innocent. Please, Lord, I am." Then, after a moment, he said urgently, "All right, God, if you want to let me go, I won't curse you."

The guards strapped him down by force.

As the door was locked and as his shirt had become soggy with his red blood, Pierce screamed, "God, you son of a bitch, don't let me go like this!"

4. *A Stretch in San Quentin*

Although I can't really claim that San Quentin was my Yale College and my Harvard, I don't remember many days there when I didn't learn something I hadn't known before. Often my new knowledge was narrowly technical — how to lift a man's suit from a department store, say, or the best way to blow a safe. Taken as a whole, the experience was educational in a good deal broader sense. I am, for instance, reminded now and then of Pierce, for his response to the cruel choice offered him seems to me to be mirrored more and more in the choices of action offered the rest of us: at the ultimate moment does one go along quietly with the man in charge or does one resist as bitterly as one can? The young have chosen to hang tough, while the rest of us are in imminent danger of being dragged down by our failure to find an alternate course of action.

Even now, fifteen years later, it's hard for me to say how much of my feelings about California were conditioned by the three years I spent at the prison. It was, of course, an upside-down California I saw there, a worm's eye view of the state translated through the eyes of pimps from the San Francisco tenderloin, junkies from the Oakland ghetto, car thieves from Sacramento, rapists from San Bernardino, murderers from the steamy jungles of Los Angeles, catamites from Eureka. They had a lot to say and I was their Big Ear, a strange fellow

in their eyes who apparently didn't care about making it on the Outside and whose classroom techniques were those of a sometimes inspired amateur.

So there I was, with a foot on either side of the Great Divide, spending half my day at my typewriter in Tiburon, that most-desired suburb much esteemed by real estate agents and upward mobile housewives, and the other half of the day in the prison, looking at things from the bottom up. After I got home, I'd go back to my desk again and make notes in a journal that was going to be the skeleton of the great book I was going to write about San Quentin. I did write a book about San Quentin, but it wasn't the great one I had in mind. What was missing, I now think, was the understanding that, instead of being an exotic place far removed from the greater world outside, San Quentin in fact then contained many elements that were prophetic of what would happen outside some years later. (I left San Quentin in the middle 1950's.) It would be somewhat overstating the case to argue that California is now turning into a great San Quentin, but the idea has at least some poetic truth to it.

The notion that what I had seen in prison foreshadowed what was going to happen in the world outside occurred to me first when the drug culture began to invade our middle-class world. Then I began to hear young people around me using language I had heard in prison ten years earlier: "Turn me on." "That was a bad trip" (or a good one). "That's cool, man, that's real tough."

The sense in which the civilization of San Quentin can serve as a paradigm of the civilization of California is that it is here in prison that we can see most clearly (as clearly as in a specimen in a pathology laboratory) the process of private disintegration and methodical reorientation in the para-fascist style. This process of reorientation (in prison it is called rehabilitation) is generally regarded as a laudable thing, for it is believed to be superior to the lash and the dungeon, not only in point of humaneness but also because its

putative goal is to turn sociopaths into useful citizens. But, in a somewhat diluted fashion, is not this also what is happening to the rest of us as our leaders tighten their instruments of control? Like the population of San Quentin, the population of California is in the process of being rehabilitated, and the one parafascist state is not entirely unlike the other.

Here is a gallery of prisoners:

Coglin is the best student in the day high school. He is personable, quiet, well spoken, a slender man with wavy hair and delicate features. I looked him up in the files in the office. He's in for murder in the second degree, five years to life. He told an interviewer that he'd come out to California after his marriage in Philadelphia had begun turning sour. The idea was that he'd get a job and then he'd send for his wife and his kid and they'd start life anew.

It didn't work out that way. The only jobs Coglin could get were as a bellhop and waiter. He took up with a girl who was working in a shipyard as a welder or riveter. Later she became a B-girl, hustling drinks in a Market Street bar. Coglin had a child by her of whom he became very fond, fonder than he was of his son back in Philadelphia. The arrangement might have worked out except that his girl friend ran around with other men. They began to fight. They drank a lot and then became nomadic, wandering all over California, picking up and moving whenever the situation got to be too much for them wherever they were. They were in Stockton, Bakersfield, Red Bluff, Azusa. They kept fighting because wherever they were Coglin's girl friend kept putting it out for other men.

One night words got sharp while they were working on a bottle of bourbon in the kitchen of their apartment. Coglin lifted his hand to the girl. The girl picked up a kitchen knife. Coglin took the knife from her and hacked her to death.

We've been reading *Macbeth* aloud in English class. There was resistance at first — nobody wanted to play the parts of

the three weird sisters — but then all of a sudden there was great interest when they began to find out what it was all about.

Haley, who is not one of the intellectuals, says, “Macbeth was all right. He took what he wanted.”

Garrett has been educating me again. He reported to me today the arrival of a new fish so beautiful that “she” even looked desirable in prison denims. (Punks, passive homosexuals, are always “she.”) Furthermore, Garrett knew the story of her fall. She had been passing as a woman and had married a marine. With the excuse that she didn’t want to take a chance on getting pregnant, she had persuaded the marine to avoid normal intercourse. One night when she was working on him with her mouth, the marine became overcome by lust and reached for her groin, where he found an erect penis. The false woman was, Garrett says, convicted of fraud. (I don’t believe it.) Garrett finished by assuring me piously, as if I cared, that he wasn’t going to go near her.

It’s hard to sort out the true and false in stories of prison brutality. Between classes today, Jaspers remarked that he thought the cons usually got a pretty fair break from the administration. Every once in a while, though, some blood gets shed. Jaspers told me about Captain Harris, a beefy, rock-faced stereotype of a tough policeman, who has the reputation of being hard but fair. But, Jaspers said, watch out when he loses his temper. Last New Year’s Eve, when Harris was checking a man in isolation, the inmate picked up his slop bucket full of excrement and threw it in Harris’s face. Harris went after him with a ring of heavy cell keys and cut him up so savagely that the chief physician is said to have protested. The prisoner is reported to still be in the hospital.*

* Captain Harris is now the warden of a state prison elsewhere in the West.

Bullshitting while we waited for the last bell today, we talked about narcotics. I said I thought if we legalized drugs, it would at least take the profit out of the racket.

A prisoner named Wade told me this story while we walked out of the building and into the yard: "I lived with a woman who used that shit, Mr. Lamott. You don't know what it can do to a person. She just sat there slobbering and scratching. We'd have a party, she'd sit there slobbering, and pretty soon she'd pull up her skirt and start scratching, right in front of everybody. She'd put her hands inside her drawers and scratch, scratch, scratch. She couldn't eat unless she had the stuff, and she'd do anything to get it. Finally, I said to her, 'Woman, you kick that shit or you get out.' Well, she had to get out."

Hofstadter is in trouble. He had been showing me the verse he writes, usually derivative and often romantic. I told him to try to find his own voice. A week later he brought in a couple of new poems. They were violent and, as the counselors say, antisocial, but they were written in his own voice. Several days later he told me that someone had fingered him. His cell had been shaken down. The guards on the goon squad had found his new verse and had beefed him for being anti-social and un-American.

The pleasures of crime: Somebody in class said that the anticipation of something is always greater than the satisfaction it really brings. (We're getting quite philosophical these days.) Young Barkham objected. When, after a successful robbery, he got back to his room and spread the greenbacks over the bed, he felt a moment of supreme exaltation.

Codman told the class the story of how he had been returned to prison for violating his parole.

He'd been doing time at the minimum-security institution at Chino. When his sentence was up, the warden shook his

hand and wished him luck. On the bus en route to his home in Pomona, Codman struck up a conversation with a woman who turned out to have been visiting her husband in Chino. They went to LA together and tumbled into bed. Codman says he was overcome by guilt feelings afterward.

The next day he reported to his parole officer and then started working as a clerk in an insurance office. He says he was accepted by the other employees without any question. He began dating his boss's secretary, a good-looking girl who turned out to be a Christian. Codman wanted to get between her thighs; the girl wanted to convert him to Christianity. The affair finally broke up with neither of them succeeding.

The next girl Codman went with was a college girl, whom he describes as coming from a family of "society folk." One night at dinner at her house, the conversation turned to a local boy who'd been sent to San Quentin. Codman stood up for him, and then revealed that he too had done time. Instead of throwing him out, the society folks had made much of him. He married the girl, but it didn't work out. After the family got an annulment, Codman hit the road, scattering checks as he went. This is why he's back in prison.

At the end of his story, Codman turned to me, saying, "But I've been saved, Mr. Lamott. I've been saved by Christianity. Have *you* found Christ?"

In the seventh grade class in which I substituted today, there is a black man named Ring, who is in for a sex beef. During the break, he introduced me to his father, who is in third grade and was also busted on a sex beef. They seemed to be pleasant fellows, and both expressed their gratitude for the educational opportunities that had been offered them here.

Middle-class convicts are quite rare. When they surface it is often as clerks and bookkeepers. A new clerk in the education office is Samuel Conley, a high school teacher from Sac-

ramento, who beat his wife and two children to death just before Christmas two years ago. He is quiet, articulate, ironic.

Herrera, a *chicano*, otherwise known in prison as a chili-choker, corrected me when I referred to "Mexican" names in some connection or other. These names weren't Mexican, he said, but Spanish. Mexican meant Indian. (Herrera himself is quite dark-skinned and Indian-looking.)

Last night, Herrera brought some Mexican magazines to class. Guessing that he wanted to demonstrate to us how progressive Mexico is, I suggested he take us on a trip. (Convicts were "taking trips" long before anybody heard of LSD.) Herrera scowled, but he wasn't going to pass up the chance and delivered a sardonic lecture on Mexican history. It went something like this: "Then we — I mean the Mexicans — got the crazy idea they wanted to be independent. (But I'm not a Mexican, I was born in Los Angeles.) Independence! Big deal, big deal." And so on.

I tried to help out with occasional leading questions. The next night he grinned when he saw me and said, "You were sure trying hard to find out what I really think, weren't you?"

The prisoners say that the most terrible sound a man can hear is the clash of the prison gate closing behind him as he goes through the entryway in the wall. I have heard this sound perhaps a thousand times, but I have also heard it a precisely equal number of times as I left. This makes something of a difference.

5. *Ticket of Leave*

When I saw Prince Legendre for the last time, it was outside the count gate, where a Department of Corrections bus was taking aboard a draft of prisoners. I asked a guard where they were headed.

"Folsom," the guard said, naming the great granite prison on the banks of the American River northeast of Sacramento, where refractory prisoners make license plates and do their time with a minimum of interference from guidance counselors, group therapists, and schoolteachers.

The prisoners were wearing the California convict's traveling uniform, a white cotton jumpsuit and slippers, and as I waited for them to clear the count gate so I could go in, I watched their faces and wondered how they felt about going up the river to Folsom. They approached the bus slowly, in single file, each man giving his name to a guard sergeant who stood at the side of the bus door with a clipboard in his hand.

Prince was the last man to board the bus. His jumpsuit was too small for his tall, slender body, but he managed to project his customary air of coolness and elegance in spite of his uncovered ankles and wrists. When he saw me, he raised a hand and wagged long, snaky fingers at me. His skin looked even blacker than usual against the white uniform, but there was nothing obscure about the expression on his face, which said clearly that, regardless of what was going to happen to him, he would still be the elegant one — the hustler, the player, the sport. I smiled and raised a finger of recognition and, I hoped, encouragement.

The sergeant got in behind Prince, the door closed, and the

bus turned and headed toward the main gate. As I saw it go, I was reminded of one of the last exchanges I'd had with Prince. During our weekly audio-visual period we'd seen the movie *Les Miserables*, with Charles Laughton as Inspector Javert and Fredric March as the hero. The prisoners had thought it was a great film.

Afterwards one of the men had said that he was surprised he'd never heard of *Les Miserables* before. Didn't people on the outside like movies like that?

I'd said it had in fact been quite a popular movie, but it was pretty old and, so far as I knew, it hadn't been revived. Besides, I'd gone on, free people reacted a little differently to the movie from the way cons did. They didn't, for example, whoop and holler and beat their hands to bloody pulps at the scene in which Javert throws himself into the Seine.

There had been general laughter as they had recalled the climactic scene, and then Prince had spoken up.

"Free people?" he'd asked. "Who are you talking about?"

"You know," I'd said. "*Free* people." (I was impatient with him because "free people" is the common term for prison employees and, by extension, anybody in the great world outside.)

"Who's free?" Prince had insisted, echoing a line in the film.

"Oh my God," I'd said.

"I'm serious," Prince had insisted. "You go out the gate at night and drive home to your old lady. You do it every night. Is that being free? If you stop on the way and have a couple of beers, I bet she rides your ass. Is that being free?"

"Let's leave my old lady out of this," I'd suggested.

"You got to be here at one o'clock in the afternoon," Prince had said. "Not at one minute after one or two minutes after one or three minutes after one. You got to be here at one o'clock. Is that being free? Why, man, you're not any freer than I am."

I had brought the argument to a not particularly trium-

phant end by pointing out that if I really wanted to, I could walk out of the classroom and the education building and cross the yard and go through the count gate and out the main gate and never come back. Prince couldn't.

But now, watching Prince's bus head toward the main gate, I knew I really was going to have to get out of San Quentin and look for my destiny somewhere else. When I left, however, I did a curious thing. Instead of simply resigning, I went on an indefinite leave of absence. So far as I know, I'm still out on a ticket of leave, just like a prisoner on parole.

*Three. The Way We
Live Today*

Strangers wishing to cross the bar in thick weather should either wait for clearing or take a pilot. Fog is prevalent in the Golden Gate; radar is a great aid here.

— *United States Coast Pilot 7*

In California the contradictions of American life — or should it be of human nature — seem to glare twice as fiercely as anywhere else.

— John Gross

For even in the least frequented corners of the globe, there is not a nation so stupid, of such contracted ideas, and so weak in body and mind, as the unhappy Californians.

— Miguel Venegas, 1758

All visitors from the East know the strange spell of unreality which seems to make human experience on the Coast as hollow as the life of a troll-nest where everything is out in the open instead of being underground.

— Edmund Wilson

Death has raised himself a throne
In a strange city lying alone
Far down within the dim West. . . .

— Edgar Allan Poe

We are all dead, divorced, or broke.

— A San Francisco jet-setter, 1968

6. *Dropping Out of Sight*

Once, at a dreadful book affair at a woman's club in Berkeley, I met the poet and critic Weldon Kees, a slight, mustached man, soft of speech. We both had books out that year. My wife and Kees and I huddled in a corner, away from the clubwomen, and, finding that we shared some interests, talked of seeing each other again. Before this ever happened, Kees's car was found deserted in the parking lot at the northern end of the Golden Gate Bridge. There was no note. Nikki and I argued for a while about whether Kees had killed himself or had gone underground. (The bodies of thirty per cent of the presumed suicides from the bridge are never found, leaving a good deal of latitude for people intent on shucking off the visible parts of their lives and starting over again.)

Although nobody knows how many people have gone underground by this route, I am inclined toward the belief that we Californians are much driven toward this solution when our lives approach the intolerable and that the state shelters an inordinate number of people who have beat a strategic retreat from life. There was, for example, the professor at the California Institute of Technology who, as Kees perhaps did, dropped out of sight. He was discovered several years later, working as a groom at a racetrack. When it was suggested to him that he return to his students and his family, he replied that he'd rather stay with the horses.

And then there are those who actually drop off the girders two hundred feet above the water but come back like Orpheus from the underworld. The first survivor was a twenty-year-old girl named Cornelia Van Ireland, who broke her back but lived. This was in 1941. Twenty-three years later, a

sixteen-year-old named Tom Tawser came up swimming and made his way to a passing freighter. He had broken his collarbone and some ribs. Two years later, another youth landed in the water in the path of a sailboat, which picked him up. He had broken no bones at all.

On July 15, 1969, a long-haired twenty-year-old man named James Layton called out "Good-bye, loves," to a teenage couple walking on the bridge and then jumped feet first from the railing on which he had been sitting. He was wearing flowered bell-bottomed slacks and was holding a pair of sandals in his hands.

When Layton dropped from the railing, he was the 367th person known to have jumped from the bridge. When he came to the surface and began to swim, singing as he went, he became the fourth person who is known to have survived. When he was examined ashore, the doctors found nothing worse than bruises on his feet and ankles.

As it turned out, Layton, like other members of his generation, had been trying to destroy himself by less spectacular means. He told people at the hospital he had been dropping acid for eighteen months and on the night before he jumped had taken mescaline. Besides that, he had been attending an institution called the Church of Cosmic Light. "He's been real hung up lately, talking about seeing the golden doors and things like that," one of his roommates said.

Layton himself offered an explanation that wasn't particularly enlightening. "I guess maybe I might have tripped out by the guidance of my leader," he said.

There is something insanely appropriate and genuinely Californian about Jimmy Layton and his attempted leave taking, complete with its physical and psychic paraphernalia of the erstwhile love generation. It is also insanely appropriate that the graceful catenary of the bridge is in a real sense the symbol of death, California style.

7. Dr. Kelley Kills Self

The roots of parafascism in California go back at least to the vigilance committee of 1856. Although these vigilantes have often been described as a spontaneous grass-roots movement responding to intolerable corruption, they were in fact premature parafascists. *Violence in America*, a staff study submitted to the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence, noted of the vigilance committee: "The San Francisco vigilantes were anti-Catholic; their hero and martyr was the anti-Romanist editor James King of William, and most of their victims of 1856 were Catholics. Although their ranks included laborers and mechanics, there was a distinct class tinge to the 1856 movement: middle and upper-class merchants were aligned against the lower-class adherents of the San Francisco Democratic machine. Last but not least was a disregard for civil liberties."

Parafascism raised its head again in California a number of times in the intervening century, notably in the endemic anti-Oriental movements. It was quiescent, however, in 1962, when the Cumaean Sibyl of our times, the computer, told us that California was about to overtake New York as the most populous state of the Union. The event was greeted by a mighty chorus of alleluias not only from the assembled chambers of commerce but also from the editorial offices of the national weeklies. *Life*, *Look*, and *Newsweek* led the celebration with special issues and, to nobody's surprise, there was a good deal of similarity in their views of the champion state. Looking back, one can see some plain clues to the coming of parafascism, but at the time our eyes were elsewhere.

As *Newsweek* summed it up, "Out of this happy hedonism has emerged an archetype 'typical' Californian, freed of the stuffy confinements of his birthplace elsewhere. He is a synthesis, reflecting both the best and the worst of the American tradition." *Look* saw another aspect of California, "The best place in the world for facing the problems of the future is California, where the future is happening every day," while *Life* enlisted a reformed television comic named Carl Reiner to vary this diet with what it called a minority view, in the course of which Reiner fired off such boffo lines as "I think it's God looking down, warning, 'Don't be so smug, or I'll smog you up.'" (In the years since then, the Almighty has surely made his displeasure plain.)

At the time, I read the magazine tributes with uncommon attention and a little guilt, for in my days as a stringer for *Newsweek*, I had contributed more than my share to the folklore about California. It was, consequently, with some dismay that I read *Look*, which devoted a color spread to crookneck squash, artichokes, eggplant, leeks, and other California vegetables. The late Bishop Pike told a man from *Life* that there was more compassion and commitment out here, and *Look* and *Life* both made good with the obligatory tit shots of nubile females. The weapons industry was mentioned, but mainly as an economic curiosity, and there weren't clues at all that many Californians live in such unprepossessing places as Stockton, Modesto, Richmond, Sacramento, South San Francisco, Porterville, Barstow, Gilroy, or Willits, where they are employed as grease monkeys in gas stations, tellers in banks, swamper in chemical plants, checkers in supermarkets, typists in insurance agencies, and snout-pullers in slaughterhouses.

Nor was it surprising that in all these gorgeously gilded pages there were no hints of decay. It was only eight years ago, but Watts, Berkeley, Isla Vista, and East Los Angeles had yet to take on the connotations they have now. A competent and experienced Democratic politician, unfortunately

gifted with a permanent foot in his mouth, was governor. It seems to me a remarkable coincidence that the emergence of California as the number one state occurred almost precisely at the end of an age of innocence. The clues were there, but nobody was ready to understand them.

The chief and most boring myth about California is that it is populated by well-made, muscular types who spend their lives swimming, skiing, driving sports cars at high speed, going to parties, and making love. Is it, indeed, accidental that the "typical Californian" of these witless celebrations of our brave new world is our old friend, the tanned, blond, blue-eyed Northern European? I think possibly it is not.

"Whether skiing at Squaw Valley or twisting in Los Angeles, the typical Californian is on the go, go, go," said *Look*, while *Newsweek* contributed the information that Californians are "sports-mad, youth-mad, outdoors-mad, and compulsively peripatetic." It is hard to resist statements made with such conviction, but the fact is that most Californians don't even know anybody who lives like this. God knows what the typical Californian really looks like, but my guess is that he is likely to have a somewhat darker skin than is considered photogenic in a national magazine, that he works at a job that bores him silly, that his chief worry is making his paycheck last until Friday, and that the most violent exercise he gets is climbing the steps in Candlestick Park or Chavez Ravine. The writers for *Life* and *Look* and *Newsweek* can afford to live in places like Santa Monica and the Berkeley hills and Marin County, where, as we shall see, there is a style that is recognizable as the Good Life — but California is somewhere else again.

The troubles at Watts and the impact of the Black Panthers have obliged us to recognize that California has always included in its population a large proportion of people with dark skins — Mexicans, Chinese, East Indians, Japanese, Filipinos, and the native Indians, long maligned as "Diggers." You wouldn't have known anything about these people, how-

ever, from reading the magazines just a couple of years before the lid blew off at Watts. The only non-Caucasian faces I saw in the whole dismaying business were those of Dizzy Gillespie playing his trumpet and a Nisei couple necking in a hammock. This was an act of either stupidity or dishonesty that I found hard to understand. Where, for instance, were the *chicanos*?

Then there was the matter of the intellectual climate. At the time of which I am writing, I was involved in editing the magazine *Contact*. We had managed to keep *Contact* alive for five years, working on the premise that there was an intellectual life in California that would support a magazine of its sort, but I couldn't begin to recognize either my editorial colleagues or my friends in the prose offered by the weeklies. According to *Look*, "In California, more than elsewhere, intellectuals are starting to arise from their foxholes." This sounded encouraging, but I don't think it meant any more than *Newsweek's* brisk reference to the Bay Area's "ferment of saxophones, cyclotrons, and egghead-beatnik intellectuality." The unfriendly tone of the last three words, however, wasn't nearly as bad as *Life's* strategy, which was to demonstrate that out here artists are just folks, California-style folks. California artists, said *Life*, are "as well equipped with surfboards, golf clubs, fishing rods and guns as with brushes and blowtorches and they pitch into sports with the passion of professionals." They printed a page of color pictures of athletic artists to prove their point so I can't say they were lying, but if I ever saw any of the painters I know with a gun in his hands I'd lose no time calling the fuzz. The point is that whatever is to be said about the California intelligentsia it can hardly be said in terms of an editorial gimmick, whether the gimmick is a foxhole, an egghead beatnik, or an abstract expressionist spear fisherman.

If I am beginning to sound facetious, it is from desperation at having tried to find common ground with the writers of these essays. The California I know isn't their California and

the Californians I know aren't their Californians. I happen to know people of a good many colors and a variety of occupations and incomes, but the thing that makes them all genuine citizens of California is that, unless they have given up entirely, they are trying to make some sense out of their lives in a community where the gap between the myths and the reality is uncomfortably wide. This is hardly an original observation, but it happens to be true. The struggle is often not a happy one, and as I look back, I am appalled by the number of people I've known who have been wretchedly involved with the bottle, with the psychiatrists, with divorce, or with suicide.

Here are a couple of my favorite insane quotations:

"In 1850 Montalvos had called California the Terrestrial Paradise. Most Californians today would say that this fiction writer was also a prophet." Irving Stone in *Life*.

"California's greatest difference is that we are now on the way to creating an anxiety-free people." Irving Stone in *Newsweek*.

This is the myth in its purest form, and I don't find the dangerous foolishness of people like Irving Stone easy to condone. In fact, I am prepared to argue that these mythmakers have a good deal to do with driving Californians to the bottle, the psychiatrist, the divorce court, or the Golden Gate Bridge. The mechanism, I suspect, goes something like this: "Why am I so unhappy, so miserable, and so wretched when I am living in the most desirable place in the world among happy, well-adjusted anxiety-free people? There must be something dreadfully wrong with *me*." This is a gross oversimplification, but it can't be far from one aspect of the truth, for all the statistical evidence makes one point clear: Californians in the mass are the unhappiest people in the United States.

If acute alcoholism is an indicator of psychic misery, then Californians hold some sort of prize. California has always been a hard-drinking state, but nobody knew precisely how

hard until, a few years ago, researchers at Yale published some figures on "alcoholism with complications," which is to say on the comparative numbers of people showing the clinical symptoms of absorbing too much alcohol and not enough food. San Francisco's rate was twice that of any other big city, with Sacramento following not far behind. Curiously, the incidence of alcoholism in Los Angeles was less than half San Francisco's, but LA was still ahead of such sinful towns as New York, Chicago, and New Orleans. (Of the eastern cities only Washington, D.C., approximates San Francisco.) In San Francisco the myth is that the respectable citizens are high-living champagne-drinking types, with serious alcoholism limited to a few hundred derelicts on Skid Row. The fact seems to be that those one-out-of-five San Francisco adults who are fighting the bottle are more likely to be a used-car salesman who lives in a black slough of debts or a Sunset district housewife who puts away an astonishing amount of cooking sherry every day out of sheer desperation over the cards life has dealt her. I don't want to push this point too far, but it does seem worth mentioning in the face of these reports from New York of "happy hedonism" and an "anxiety-free people."

And there is divorce. I'm not thinking about the well-publicized games of musical beds played around Hollywood and Beverly Hills but about, say, the suburbs of San Francisco, where the principal avocation of the residents is telling each other what a wonderful place it is and how wonderfully happy they are. But the fact of the matter is that, whatever they say when the man from *Life* or *Look* is within earshot, Californians are apparently not blissfully happy when they're home in bed, for something over half their marriages end up in court. In San Mateo County, a particularly pleasant suburb south of San Francisco, the figure is better than seven out of ten.

I must say I understood this phenomenon better after reading *Look's* poker-faced account of the domestic life of a Cali-

fornia engineer and his wife: "When the Irwins join their neighbors for a night out, they ride off in one car 'married style' — men in front, wives in back. Nickel-limit poker is standard procedure for the husbands when the wives foregather, as they frequently do, for a 'Tupperware party' . . . where they play parlor games and buy plastic dishes." Divorce must come as a merciful release after a few years of this.

Let us return to this later, for at the moment my mind is set on the ultimate rejection of the joys of this terrestrial paradise. So many people in California kill themselves that an entire machinery of explanation has grown up around the phenomenon, the principal product being the explanation that these suicides are maladjusted outsiders. It just ain't so. Dr. Richard Selden, the area's leading suicidiologist, reported not long ago that, on the average, only four persons a year come to San Francisco to commit suicide. The other two hundred or so have been living in the city, and of these more than three-quarters have been here five years or longer.

In late 1957, when I was writing television scripts, I encountered my first suicide. He was Douglas Kelley, a professor of psychology at Berkeley and vice-chairman of the department of criminology, with whom I'd been assigned to do a show about psychology. I was told that Dr. Kelley was a big, expansive, outgoing person and that I shouldn't have any trouble with the script.

I phoned Dr. Kelley and made a date to meet him at his home in North Berkeley on a Saturday morning in late November. We struck it off well as we talked in his study, which was decorated with mementos of his service in World War II, in which he had been chief of psychiatry for the army in Europe. Among his souvenirs were vials of poison and other contraband taken from the Nazi leaders on trial at Nuremberg, where he had been in charge of the psychiatric examinations of the prisoners.

We got down to work, agreeing that the title wished on us

by the sponsor's advertising agency was pretty funny. It was "The Science of Happiness." We decided not to pay too much attention to the title but to work up a show built around some simple prescriptions for mental health ("Don't bottle things up"). The main problem was, for the sake of the medium, to work up some visual analogs of these rules. Dr. Kelley's mind was quick and inventive, and I realized after we'd been talking for about an hour that, for all practical purposes, the script had already been laid out for me in my notes.

As I drove away from the interview, I also realized that I was being gnawed by envy. At the age of thirty-four, I didn't seem to have made a particular impact on the world, and I seemed to myself to have become completely bogged down in the dreary business of trying to raise a family on an income that was always too small, while not having enough time to do what I conceived to be my proper business in life — writing novels.

Here was Douglas Kelley, barely ten years older, and possessing, by contrast, everything that is thought of in the American Dream. He had achievement and recognition in his profession. He enjoyed an income that was sweetened by fees for books, articles, speaking engagements and consulting assignments. He was often in the public eye as an expert witness in criminal trials. He owned a handsome house. His wife was good-looking and well spoken and his children — two boys and a girl — seemed happy. He appeared, in short, to be the very image of the confident man who had come to grips with the world and had coped victoriously with it on his own terms.

I saw Douglas Kelley again when we reviewed my draft script and made arrangements to meet at the studio for a rehearsal on the day of the show, which was to be just after New Year's Day. As is our annual custom, my family and I escaped for the holiday season to a shack on the mesa at Bolinas, where we deliberately cut off communication with the great world outside. I spent several days doing a little read-

ing, a little drinking, and a great deal of walking on the mesa and along the beaches, and began to feel like a human being again.

On January second, my wife's sister and her husband drove up to the cabin, bringing us a copy of a San Francisco morning paper. On page one was the headline:

UC CRIME EXPERT
DR. KELLEY
KILLS SELF

The lead of the story read: "Dr. Douglas M. Kelley, internationally known criminologist, committed suicide in his Berkeley home yesterday by swallowing poison.

"The 45-year-old University of California professor and vice-chairman of the school's department of criminology staggered out of his study in mid-afternoon and told his wife, Alice-Vivienne: 'I've just taken some potassium cyanide.' "

Cooking had been one of Dr. Kelley's hobbies, and he had spent the afternoon in the kitchen, cooking the family New Year's dinner. A little before five o'clock he had left the kitchen and rushed into his study, where he had stayed for several minutes. When he came out, it was to tell Mrs. Kelley that he had taken the poison. He was dead on arrival at Herick Memorial Hospital.

The only theories the newspaper reporters could offer about his possible motives were that he had consulted a doctor because of an upset stomach and might have been worrying about his health, and that he had been under considerable pressure to meet commitments for lectures and other appearances (including, of course, my television show).

I called the producer from the public telephone outside the general store in Bolinas village and found him in considerable distress, both because he had known Kelley much better than I had, and because we had to put together a substitute show in three days. We decided to call on an old standby, a zoologist,

and ask him to repeat a show about animals that he had done for us a couple of years before.

In the weeks that followed, the puzzle of Douglas Kelley's suicide came up again and again in conversation among those of us who, after the weekly ordeal in the studio, would walk down the alley to Hanno's, a newspaperman's bar, where we would usually sit late, unwinding and talking. A couple of these men had known Kelley well, and they assured me that, so far as they had been able to find out, there had been no rational motive at all. Except for the upset stomach, he had been in good health. His domestic life had apparently been calm. He had not, so far as anybody knew, been pressed for money. He had shown no symptoms of psychic distress except for the suicide itself. In the end, nobody had a satisfactory explanation.

Douglas Kelley was not the only California suicide I've known. Last summer one of my closest friends cut his wrist and tried to die like a Roman in his bathtub. Several weeks later another old friend, a gentle and talented man, was found dead on a Marin County beach, a bottle of Seconal and a bottle of vodka in a paper bag at his side. Still another man I knew, a young lawyer with whom I'd gone sailing, killed himself during the same summer. Yet, in spite of these more recent tragedies, Douglas Kelley's death continues to tug at my mind. It is not only that in personal terms his suicide seemed a denial of the qualities that had characterized his life but also that in some way his suicide struck me as the archetypal California suicide, the symbolic act that stands for the drive toward self-destruction that seems unaccountably to be part of all our lives in California.

And it has been thus since California began. While I was working in the bowels of the San Francisco Public Library, I discovered in the columns of the *San Francisco Chronicle* for 1878 an item that read: "First, suicidal death is more frequent in San Francisco than anywhere else in the civilized world. . . . Second, it is accompanied by a similar preemi-

nence and development of insanity. . . ." Two years later the newspaper called San Francisco the "champion city of the world for suicides," citing a total of 90 suicides during the year for a population of 233,000. This works out to about 39 per hundred thousand, which is high indeed. It has stayed high since then and seems to be rising even higher. In San Francisco, the suicide rate in 1968 was 27.7 per hundred thousand. In 1969 it rose to 38.3, or over three times the national average of about 11. (The rate for California as a whole is about 18.) Suicide appears not only to be thoroughly built into our way of life out here but also to have its roots deep in our past.

And so, after all the propaganda in *Life* and *Look* and *Newsweek* about the radiance of our life out here, one overwhelming question remains to be answered: why do we Californians kill ourselves either literally or symbolically more frequently than do the residents of any other state? Why are the citizens of this terrestrial paradise more inclined to self-murder than the citizens of, say, North Dakota or Alabama or the steamy urban jungles of New York or Chicago?

The answer, I think, is that the conditions of our lives — our psychic lives in particular — are becoming less and less tolerable. The mock-sanity of the parafascist style is prevailing, and we are all beginning to show some signs of madness.

8. *Hot-Ass Young Broad*

Although, as I have just noted, I am much of two minds about California, I am also much taken by its particular pleasures. One of the pleasures I take in Tiburon is that it is a congenial place for a walker. The terrain is hilly, but most

of the streets climb gently and it is hard to find yourself on a street without a view of something: of the East Bay cities of Richmond, Berkeley, and Oakland; of San Francisco and the bay; of Angel Island and Raccoon Strait; of the Golden Gate; of Wolfback Ridge above Sausalito; of Belvedere and its lagoon; of Mount Tamalpais with its fancied outline of a reclining Indian maiden.

I was walking along Centro West Street the other day, looking at the new houses being built on the slope above the street and, on Centro West itself, the clapboard and shingle houses built for the railroadmen's families. We lived in this part of town for several years and I like it. The railroad is gone but some of the railroad families still live here and their presence manages to save the older part of Tiburon from the suburban miasma that is growing up around it.

It was here that my neighbor Jim Testa, who was then about seventy, knocked on my door about nine o'clock one night to tell me that his grapes had just arrived from the Napa Valley. Between then and about three in the morning, Jim and I and Matt Grbac and, as I recall, Old Man Locati pressed enough grapes to make about four hundred gallons of strong, dark-red wine that would take the top of your head off if you drank too much of it. Jim knew that it was the last vintage he was going to make, and it was. He died a couple of years later and Matt followed him not too long after that. Old Man Locati is still with us.

But that was quite a while ago. As I walked along the other day, I noticed that another of the railroad houses was being subjected to a face-lifting with redwood and glass. Ahead of me a couple in their thirties was talking earnestly. As I came closer, they separated. The man walked toward me, a sparely built, serious-looking man with a beard. We nodded as we passed. The woman, a good-looking, dark-haired female whose body did no outrage to the shirt and jeans she was wearing, got behind the wheel of a small red car. She started the engine and then, just after I had walked by her, she leaned

out of the window and shouted after the man, "Go ahead and fuck your hot-ass young broad any time you want! She's waiting for you right now with her pants down. Go on, I don't give a damn!"

As the serious-looking man walked onward up the slight incline, the woman looked after him in silence for a while before she pulled her head back in and put the car in gear. The thing that stuck in my mind was that the look on her face was not of anger alone but also of glorious fulfillment, almost as if she had just completed a particularly satisfying act of love.

9. *A Lousy Place to Raise Kids*

Let me, then, stay close to home for a while and pursue the theme of private disintegration through Marin County, where we can find some of the most attractive as well as some of the most dismaying aspects of California.

A couple of years ago, in the course of a conversation with a man who runs an institution for treating alcoholics, I asked where the greatest incidence of alcoholism occurs in the San Francisco area. My expert laughed and said he had just looked over a survey that showed that the hardest-drinking people around San Francisco were the American Indians in the Oakland slums and the residents of the Tiburon peninsula. I didn't laugh quite as heartily as he did.

The peninsula, which encompasses the communities of Tiburon and Belvedere, whose combined population is eight thousand, is one of the most affluent sections of one of the richest suburban counties in the United States. Marin County

as a whole runs neck and neck with such other enclaves of upper-middle-class prosperity as San Mateo County, to the south of San Francisco; Montgomery County, Maryland; Westchester County, New York; and Los Alamos County, New Mexico. The income after taxes for the average Marin family was around twelve thousand dollars in 1968.

The two hundred thousand people who live in Marin's five hundred twenty square miles have available to them an abundance of the tools of leisure, besides the bottle, that is surely rivaled only by the best situated of retirement communities, which the towns of Marin decidedly are not. The residents are on the whole working people — lawyers, architects, doctors, advertising men, vice-presidents of something, stockbrokers, sales managers, and so on. Most of them travel daily to San Francisco to earn the means to enjoy what is just possibly the closest any Americans have yet come to the dream of the Good Life.

The evidence is impressive. To take one example, the fortunate people who live on Belvedere lagoon, where houses on narrow lots can be bought for seventy-five thousand dollars and up, can board their Lidos and El Toros from docks in their backyards and sail until a neighbor hails them to come ashore for a drink. For sailors to whom the lagoon is cribbed and confining, there are two yacht clubs from which they can sail out into the thirty-knot winds of San Francisco Bay or through the Golden Gate into the great Pacific itself. There are two tennis clubs on the peninsula, with swimming pools and a total of fifteen courts, most of which seem to be in use most of the time except when a winter storm is actually lashing their surfaces. A little farther away are eight golf courses. Ocean beaches are within an hour's drive. Only twenty minutes away is the foot of Mount Tamalpais, with lakes stocked with trout and a network of hikers' trails through the redwoods and madrone. (Here I try to spend at least one afternoon each week.) Twenty-five per cent of the county is occupied by park and recreation areas, with the great redwoods

of Muir Woods and the rolling moors and white cliffs of Point Reyes offering the most dramatic prospects.

While entertaining friends from Washington, D.C., we drove them one afternoon from our house on the bay through the forests of Mount Tam to our weekend shack on the mesa at Bolinas, which looks out over the Pacific. The trip took barely an hour. Our friends protested smilingly that it was hardly decent to live among such a concentration of good things. I thought I detected a note of puritanism in their envy, a suggestion that, as in the soap operas, true happiness cannot be bought, even in California. And if this is what they were in fact thinking, of course they were right.

A local historian once startled a gathering of his patriotic compeers by reading a paper that began with the observation that Marin is where the sick Indians used to be sent. As a matter of fact, tubercular Indians from around the bay were cared for in the warm and sunny climate of San Rafael, the county seat, where the penultimate of the Franciscan missions was established in 1817. Later another Indian gave his name to the county. The story goes that after having been defeated by the whites, the last chief of the Lacatuits became a ferryman on the bay, earning the name of El Marinero, the sailor, which became shortened to Marin, pronounced MARIN. (Just the other day I drove through a community called San Marin, the old ferryman having been canonized through the grace of a real estate developer.)

Those sick Indians can perform a useful symbolic function for us. Although much has happened in Marin during the years since then, the county has managed to avoid being drawn into the main currents of California's growth, and even now, in spite of its remarkable rate of population increase, it serves as a refuge, a sheltered place. After the Americans came and, by means both fair and foul but mostly foul, divested the rancheros of their lands, Marin became dairy country, which in its remoter parts it still is. Bypassed by the rush for gold, it prospered bucolically. In the latter years of

the nineteenth century, the theme of the Good Life began to assert itself as well-to-do San Franciscans built summer cottages on its hills. Belvedere acquired a mildly racy reputation for the frolics that went on in the houseboats anchored in its coves. Tiburon became a railhead for the Northwestern Pacific and qualified for its own reputation of raciness by virtue of the inordinate number of saloons that lined its main street. Elsewhere other towns took on the outlines of personalities they still enjoy: Sausalito, charming and schizophrenic, divided between the solid citizens on the hills and the free spirits on the waterfront; Mill Valley, green and a touch artsy-craftsy; Ross, with its great estates, rich; San Anselmo and San Rafael, rather stuffy.

Over the years the number of commuters has multiplied to the point that driving across the Golden Gate Bridge during the evening rush is an experience that, remembered, can bring on the night sweats. Still, even the bridge has not entirely overcome Marin's isolation. As the other four counties around the bay have drawn unto themselves such industries as electronics and aerospace, Marin has remained almost virgin, the purest of the bedroom suburbs. Improved industrial property accounts for only 1.5 per cent of the tax assessor's rolls, a statistic of which we homeowners are made painfully aware when our truly horrendous bills arrive each fall. (There is a persistent but apocryphal story that to keep the money rolling in, a deputy county assessor periodically takes to a helicopter to check on newly built swimming pools.)

It is clear that one pays for the Good Life, and, as we shall see, in more than one way.

Marin supports more than nine hundred organizations. A recent count came up with 98 parents' groups, 39 women's clubs, 105 church groups, and 30 musical organizations. There are also 216 sports clubs and teams. I don't happen to be an active participant in any of the last-named organizations, although, for reasons I don't entirely understand, the

two females in my family at one time found it necessary to belong simultaneously to two different tennis clubs.

On a weekday some time ago I happened to start out for one of these clubs and, having made a false start, ended up stopping at both. At the first club twenty women in pretty white dresses were whaling away at tennis balls. Mostly in their thirties and forties, they were well-tended, tanned, muscular of arm and leg, and intensely involved in their games. While some of them inclined to a pat-ball style of play, there were others who swung their rackets with a fervor that reminded me of one husband's comment that tennis was, at least, cheaper than psychiatry. Changing courts, a couple of the fervent types called hello to me and then went on with their game. *Thwack! Thwam! Smash!* In my mind's ear I heard womanly voices chorusing "*Take that, and that and that,*" and, being the only male in the vicinity except for the club pro, who was stringing a racket in his shop, I retreated.

At the other club, some thirty ladies of similar aspect were engaged in the morning's round robin. The club's round robin, which goes on five days a week, is based on an organization of regulars and substitutes that is treated with the seriousness of the order of battle for a major military engagement. Players give up their places on the roster only for the gravest reasons — family bankruptcy, a mortally sick child, or pregnancy. The prudent husband does not treat lightly dinner table accounts of round robin politics. Tennis is a serious business. As I approached one court, I was greeted by a lady of mature judgment and quick intelligence who will willingly play tennis seven days a week, morning and afternoons. Feeling like a spy from a foreign country, I completed my errand and fled.

Later that morning, needing paper clips or rubber bands, I walked to the dime store in the shopping center. The round robins were over, and the tennis players were now in the shops. Marin is not the sort of place where women go shopping in bathing suits. Even shorts are not looked upon with

favor. Tennis dresses, however, enjoy a general dispensation. Perhaps it is their virtuous whiteness; perhaps their association with vigorous and laudable sport. Yet it has struck me forcefully, both on the courts and in the shopping center, that ladies' tennis, at least as we know it on the Tiburon peninsula, is a phenomenon whose psychic depths have never been adequately plumbed.

The picture of Marin would not be complete without considering two of Marin's minorities: first, the Negroes. There is really no place for Negroes in Marin, and their one sociological function often seems to be to remind us of the realities of life in the world outside.

There are between four and five thousand Negroes in Marin, or about two per cent of the population. Half of them live in Marin City, which started its life as a wartime housing development for shipyard workers and which has now turned into a model of well-designed apartment buildings and houses on a site for which the local real estate developers would willingly give their collective eyeteeth. Nevertheless, Marin City remains a ghetto, with all the familiar problems of rootless and angry young men and families supported by hard-working women who do the domestic work of their white sisters.

Half the remaining Negroes are prisoners in San Quentin, which for more than a hundred years has occupied a sort of limbo in the county, in spite of its formidable yellow walls, and is easily forgotten except when our jurors are called on to pass on knifings in the Big Yard or assaults on the guards.

Most of the rest of the blacks in Marin are serving as airmen at Hamilton Air Force Base.

With the exception of a very small number of professionals, Marin's blacks have little experience of the Good Life as the rest of the county knows it. Their problems are not the problems of the white people on the lagoons, the bay shore, and the hills. If there is substance to the rumors I have

heard occasionally that some of the young men of Marin City have been thinking of making forays, armed with Molotov cocktails and firearms, upon the nearby white towns, then our problems will merge forcibly with theirs in a way whose outcome is hard to predict and dismaying to think about. (In 1967, in the black community called Marin City, fires were set and firemen and deputy sheriffs were shot at by snipers. Three people, including a little girl, were wounded. Since then, Marin City has been largely quiet.)

In the fall of 1969 a black principal was appointed to run a school in Sausalito. This gesture of equal opportunity was somewhat blurred, however, because his school, adjoining Marin City, was largely black, and because, when he turned out to be a thoroughgoing militant, the reactions of us white liberals became publicly and dismayingly confused. In the end he was fired.

The other, and greater, minority is the kids.

Having three children myself, I have given a good deal of thought to the lives they lead and have arrived at the considered judgment that Marin is a lousy place for kids to grow up in. California itself is a lousy place for kids to try to come to grips with the world in. Like the blacks, the kids stand outside the Good Life, which is largely a white, adult notion. It's great to be able to camp out on the slopes of Mount Tam or dig in Indian burial mounds or play tennis after school seven days out of ten the year round or sail an El Toro out of the backyard, but the real thing that's on their minds is "What's it all about, man?" and the style of life we lead here doesn't give them a very convincing answer. Torn between the psychic demands of the Good Life and their visceral resistance to the parafascist style, the kids don't have it easy.

And so even in the county that calls itself Marvelous Marin they get stoned and drop out of school and make love without prudence and contract gonorrhea and get abortions and sometimes boost cars. Some of them do, at any rate. Others

do other things, like becoming eagle scouts and getting into college and going to work or getting killed in Vietnam or getting married and raising families. Somehow, compared with the kids of communities elsewhere, the kids in Marin seem to accomplish less than they should, and their problems seem proportionately larger. The drug scene is soul-chilling. In my own immediate circle of acquaintance, two young men have had their lives irrevocably altered by drugs: one has been twice committed to a state mental hospital, while the other is faced with a term in a state prison. My household observations and those of my friends' households are disturbing enough, but I decided to go beyond this limited world and consult a couple of experts on the lives the kids really live.

Sanford Feinglass was an unlikely type to find working as an educator in drug abuses for a school board. A dark, round-faced young man, he turned out to be both articulate and irreverent. We started with the assumption that pot, speed, and acid are available at every school in the county, from junior high up, in spite of the efforts of a sheriff's squad of narcs.

"I came in with fairly clear ideas," Feinglass told me, "but they're getting more and more clouded as I deal with the kids. They've been lied to all their lives. Every time we tell them that marijuana poisons the body, we create thirty disbelievers.

"And so the kid looks at his mother and says, 'Okay, mommy, you use your drug and I'll use mine.' Well, alcohol and pot fulfill the same social purposes. Until we can level with them, the kids are going to continue to use."

He talked for a while about the significance of glue-sniffing as an initiatory ritual and then came back to the kids in Marin who use drugs so freely. "In other counties, a lot of drug use is rather laudable — gaining insight, discovering hangups, and so on. It's a little less laudable in Marin. Here, it's more a pleasure thing. There's nothing else to do. There's nowhere else to turn. Maybe the problem's greater because there's a greater literacy here and more awareness of the failures of society. The kids' great need is the need to get in-

volved and to do something meaningful. The city streets are in some ways a lot better."

In another conversation, John Parker, the youthful education officer for the county's department of public health, added some comments on other areas in which Marin's performance doesn't exactly square with its self-image. The incidence of venereal disease is going up, as it seems to be doing all over. (In 1967, the gonorrhea rate suddenly doubled, from 175.0 cases per hundred thousand population to 341.5 cases.) In spite of the pill, the number of illegitimate births is going up, with the greatest concentration being among Caucasian girls between seventeen and nineteen years old.

But statistics tell only part of the story. "We don't really know what the problem is," Parker said, "because our abortion laws are geared to the sort of people we have in Marin County. Poor people have to go to a butcher, but our girls can have relatively safe abortions elsewhere — Tijuana, for instance. Some of the increase in VD may be due to the growing hippie communities, but it really runs through all socio-economic levels."

The suicide rate in Marin doubled between 1962 and 1967. In 1968 the rate was 22.3 per hundred thousand. The next year it was 26.5, second only to San Francisco's. A coroner's investigator who became worried by this rise brought out some information that doesn't answer the main question but surely provokes thought. In the last four years in Marin County, suicides outnumbered traffic deaths. As many women kill themselves as men. The average age for male suicides is 35.5; for women, 39.5. The family income in over 80 per cent of the cases was over \$10,000 a year. Only 28 per cent of the suicides had alcohol in their systems when they died.

Clearly, we golden people of Marin hardly fit into the classic stereotype of the lotus eaters, jaded by our pleasures and dying of boredom. We work too hard to support our claims on the Good Life to begin with; besides, we spend too much of our time and energy suffering.

Our troubles, like those of our kids, are often connected with drugs and sex. Our favorite drug is of course alcohol, although, as Daniel Meyerson, who is executive director of the Marin Institute (which used to be called the Marin Institute for Alcoholism) put it, "People not being tidy about their symptoms, we get a lot of drugs."

As is the case with alcohol, there is very little of a really original nature that one can do in the way of sexual behavior. There was a brief scandal a few years ago when a quiet weekend wife-swapping circle came to light in one of our least swinging communities. More recently, two young and attractive couples of my acquaintance exchanged partners permanently and sorted out the children. They have gone on living in the same town with the same friends, an arrangement that would not, I think, be as readily accepted in the East. In general, however, our troubles with marriage and sex usually end up as simple divorce, though at a rate far in advance of that on the East Coast. In 1969 and 1970 there were more divorces than marriages in Marin. The figures for 1970 were 1,503 divorces to 1,383 marriages, which gives an apparent divorce rate of about one hundred eight per cent.

If alcoholism, drug addiction, and divorce are three indicators of unhappiness, a fourth is that constellation of the symptoms of psychic distress that are lumped together as "mental illness." Figures for mental illness are hard to interpret, and I offer only the contribution that for some years after World War II there was a single psychiatrist in private practice in Marin County; this year the yellow pages of the telephone book lists fifty of them, or about one-eighth of Marin's medical community.

And so we are obliged to resolve a paradox. There *is* distress in Eden. The pursuit of the Good Life evidently exacts payment above and beyond the dollar cost of its support. It is easy to fall back on the puritan ethic and suggest that man was not put on this earth in order to enjoy himself, but I

would rather not take this way out. Instead, I would like to propose an alternative theory.

Here in Marin we don't really have any more leisure than anybody else does. We do, however, feel differently about it than somebody who lives in, say, New Jersey. The intensity with which we go about our games is the essential clue.

How can anybody possibly be unhappy when he can indulge in his favorite pleasures so easily and so often? The answer, I think, lies in a subtle shift that I seem to see when I travel from West to East and back again. The people I know in the East tend to identify themselves primarily in terms of their professional lives. They are first of all writers, editors, television people, government officials. Here in Marin we are first of all sailors, golfers, tennis players, drinkers, talkers, fathers, philanderers. This is a dreadful oversimplification, but there is an essential truth in it and one that bears some interesting consequences.

We are talking, of course, about the old question of ends and means. Is a job primarily the means for making possible the Good Life, or is it something worth doing in itself? I don't think I am being unfair to my neighbors here in Marin—or to Californians generally—when I submit that here, much more than in the East, the job, whether it is a profession like the law or an occupation like selling insurance, is merely the means, and the Good Life is the end.

This change in values affects the sexes quite differently. For the man, the displacement of his center of gravity from his office to his home tends to strip him of the great buttress to his masculinity that lies in the mystique of his profession. He becomes, literally, domesticated, and acquires a formidable expertise in coping with the games and toys with which we occupy our leisure. For his wife, there is not even the escape to the office, diluted though this antidote may be. Once her youngest child is in school, she must make the terrible decision as to how she will spend her time — or to put it more directly, how she is going to spend the rest of her life.

Judging from the evidence we have seen, the choices are neither sufficient nor satisfying. And so we see these estimable women, the wives of doctors, architects, and lawyers, in tennis dresses and cotton frocks, tanned and well-preserved, wandering the aisles of our supermarkets with glints of madness in their eyes.

The Good Life can be a busy life, full of activity and then more activity, but why is it that our children stupefy themselves with drugs and disappear into crash pads? Why is it that the young wife of the surgeon has taken an overdose of sleeping pills again? Why is it that so many people one knows have been divorced at least once? Why do we drink as hard as the Indians do in Oakland?

The pathetic and dreadful secret is out: *Nothing really matters very much*. Winning a yacht race is just as important as winning a case in court. Playing a first-rate game of tennis is just as important as painting good pictures. Remodeling a house with one's own hands is just as important as taking a class of freshmen through *Heart of Darkness*. Nothing really matters very much, but the view of the bay is great.

This is the great tragedy of California, for a life oriented to leisure is in the end a life oriented to death — the greatest leisure of all — and in its psychic consequences we find the seedbed for the parafascist revolution.

10. *I've Been Thinking of Killing My Wife*

For a couple of months in a recent summer I became part of a group of men who met for psychotherapy twice a week in a rather bleak room at Fort Miley, the VA hospital in

San Francisco, out near the ocean. When Donald Shaskan, the psychiatrist in charge, picked this group for me, he described it as being made up of highly intelligent neurotics.* I answered that it must be the right group for me because so was I and so was almost everybody I know.

A common denominator that cropped up at every meeting was the trouble that almost every one of the members of the group had in coping with women. Since most of them were married, this meant coping with their wives. One night, a man named MacGregor, who owned a small advertising agency, put it this way:

"Do you remember that old cartoon of Thurber's? Do you remember the one that shows a little man in a funny round hat walking up to the front door of his house? Out of the side of the house looms this absolutely monstrous figure of a woman. She's growing right out of the house and sort of getting set to pounce on the little man. You can tell the little man is terrified, right down to the soles of his feet.

"Well, if you want to know what it's like, that's what it's like. That's the way it's been ever since I got married, and that's the way it is now except it's worse. The only way I get any sleep is with pills. Sometimes I feel like my guts are all knotted up. I can feel ants crawling up and down my legs. I eat Librium like peanuts. At lunch I go out and have a couple of belts and late in the afternoon I go out and have three or four more. That's how I keep going.

"In business I'm something of a gambler, but for sixteen years, ever since I got married, I've been coming home every night absolutely terrified of what I was going to find inside the apartment. Is she in a good mood? Is she in a bad mood? Is she sore at me? Is it going to be the big freeze? Even worse, is she going to be loving?"

* Among the other groups scheduled to meet at Fort Miley were groups described as Integrated, Acting Out, Psychotic, Borderline, Epileptic, Over Fifty, Art, Married Couples, and Married Couples (Homophile).

One of the other men laughed. "Sometimes I actually bleed for you."

Violently, MacGregor said, "I could learn to hate you, you dirty bastard!"

MacGregor made his most memorable move at the beginning of a subsequent session when he cleared his throat and said, "Gentlemen, I'm going to start things off on a dramatic note tonight. I've been sitting in my car in Golden Gate Park for three hours trying to figure a way to kill my wife."

We all came to attention. From behind his usual cloud of cigar smoke, Dr. Shaskan regarded MacGregor with polite interest. One of the other men laughed suddenly and said, "Well, Mac, you're making progress. At least you can talk about killing her instead of killing yourself."

"I'm absolutely serious," MacGregor said.

"Why do you want to kill her?" somebody asked.

"It's the only way I can see to get out of moving into that damned suburban house she wants," MacGregor said. "My down payment is in escrow and I can't back out now. But if she dies, I can stay in the city."

I asked, "Why don't you just leave her instead of killing her?"

MacGregor answered, deadly serious, "That wouldn't work at all. She's a very dependent person and she needs me. If I left her, she'd fall all apart."

11. *What's the Matter with Marriage Today?*

For one reason or another, we Californians are frequently obliged to recognize that the realities of our lives include the messes we manage to make of ourselves with such

dismaying regularity. The kids on acid or speed, the husbands and wives living out their lives in hatred, the frightened old people playing at being senior citizens, the people both old and young far gone in booze, the suicides — all of these reflect that wider dysfunction of our world that I have called parafascism.

Nikki and I have now and then argued about the frequency of divorce in California as opposed to divorce in the East. Nikki maintains that the more liberal Western divorce laws have a great deal to do with it, and that, in any case, most of our friends and neighbors are still married to their original partners. I have replied that she is surely right about the divorce laws, but that her latter argument is a hard one to sustain unless you restrict the definition of friends and neighbors to those who are notoriously well wedded — and even here the past year has seen a couple of Darby-and-Joan unions go up in flames. In the end, it appears that the divorced ones are my particular friends rather than Nikki's, but time is on my side.

Last summer had in fact been an unusually difficult time at home. The circumstances are not particularly relevant here, but things had become badly strained when I escaped for two weeks to the shack at Bolinas, taking along the boys. We each did our own thing, as the saying goes. Every morning after breakfast, Steve, who was ten, disappeared down the dirt road, where two young friends of his were vacationing. He would sometimes report back later in the day to refuel. John, who was seventeen, was on a reading kick and lay on his back with a book, his long hair spilling over a pillow and a bottle of beer on the floor by his side. I followed my own pattern of a little reading, a little drinking, and a lot of walking.

Partway through the first week, John drove back to Tiburon to pick up something and returned with a message, taken by the cleaning woman, that I should return a call placed by an editor of *Life*. I walked down to the pay phone and called

New York, collect. The man at *Life* said that they wondered if I'd be interested in doing a short piece about what's gone wrong with marriages today. I thought, Oh, my God, this is entirely too close to home. Then I thought, What the hell, you're a professional. So I said I'd be glad to give it a whirl. This was a mistake because the piece didn't work out at all.

But I'm getting ahead of myself. In pursuit of the article for *Life* rather than on my own account, I went looking for a marriage counselor who had some experience in putting together the debris of California marriages. I ended up with Martin Kirschenbaum at the Family Therapy Institute in San Rafael, our county seat.

Marty Kirschenbaum is a Brooklyn boy, educated at City College and Long Island University, who took his Ph.D. in psychology at the University of Kansas. He practices as a family therapist in partnership with Shirley Gerhke Luthman, a good-looking blond social worker. About forty years old, Marty is large, extroverted, warm, and articulate. As we got to know each other, I began to find him just a little overwhelming.

I spent one afternoon looking through a one-way glass panel and listening over an electronics system as Marty and another psychologist dealt with a large family named Duval whose most acute symptom involved a violent physical assault by the oldest son on his father. Mrs. Duval had been manipulating both participants in the fight in order to satisfy her own emotional needs. She scared the hell out of me.

I sat in a darkened room in the midst of a couple of dozen social workers and psychologists, for this was a training session. To the Duval family, the glass through which we were watching them appeared to be a mirror — or, more correctly, as it turned out, it was *supposed* to look like a mirror. Jerry Duval, the boy who had tried to kill his father with a bicycle chain, must have seen some ghosts behind the silvered surface, for he glared at it fixedly and then said abruptly to Marty, "You got cops in there?"

"What makes you think I got cops in there?" Marty asked.

"Somebody's there," Jerry said. "I think it's cops."

"Want to go take a look?" Marty asked.

"Okay," Jerry said.

They walked around through the hallway to the open door of the observation room. Jerry looked us over.

"Hi, Jerry," everybody said. "Hi, Jerry. Hi, Jerry."

"They don't look like cops, do they?" Marty asked.

Jerry looked disgusted, turned around, and went back.

It was a long and slow session, but by the end of the afternoon, Jerry was beginning to respond a little to Marty's leads, Mr. Duval was beginning to admit that he wasn't always one hundred per cent right, and Mrs. Duval was crying in a most satisfying way, comforted by her three younger children. It wasn't, however, exactly the sort of thing I was looking for.

We tried again. Marty introduced me to a group of about six couples who met weekly to take counsel about their common problem, which was that both parties of each marriage had been, or were now, involved in an affair with somebody else. They were all in their thirties, well dressed, good-looking, and lively. On a table were a jug of wine and a couple of plates of cookies. Somebody poured me a glass of wine as Marty explained my interest and assured them that I'd agreed to protect their privacy if they'd let me stay. A couple of the women said they wouldn't mind. A man said he wasn't sure. Then another man said he'd feel severely threatened if I didn't leave at once. I told him I didn't blame him, gulped down my wine, and left.

A third trial, the next day, found me accepted in a group of a somewhat different sort, including people of a variety of ages and social position and with a variety of problems. The focus of the meeting was on a young couple who were there for the first time. Peter was tall and bearded, wearing blue jeans, a work shirt and boots. Claire was not a bad-looking girl, wearing a blouse, skirt, and sandals. She radiated an atmosphere of dedicated slovenliness. She had brought their

month-old baby with them, and asked if anybody would mind if she breast-fed the infant if it got hungry. We all said we wouldn't mind at all. Peter asked us if we'd mind not smoking for the baby's sake. There were some grumbles at this, but we agreed.

"You look pretty sore," Marty said to Peter. "Why don't you tell us what's bugging you?"

Hesitantly at first, but picking up momentum as he went along, Peter said that in the two years they'd been married, Claire had never done anything for him. "She won't do the laundry, she won't make the bed, she never does anything about my clothes. The house is always a mess. Asking her to do something is a sure way to guarantee it won't be done. I get furious. Sometimes I get so mad I hit her."

"Is this true?" Marty asked Claire.

Claire was looking down at the top of the coffee table. She nodded. "Oh, it's true," she said. "I'm a terrible housekeeper. Sometimes when we argue about it, we get physical and hit each other." She was still looking at the coffee table, and smiling a faint smile.

Marty got down on his knees and looked up into Claire's face. "Hey," he said, "you're talking to me. I like to see your eyes."

Claire laughed and raised her face. "He won't touch me," she went on. "The only time we touch is when we fight. Any other time, he says, 'Go away, don't touch me.'"

There was a little silence. Marty said, "Look, Peter, I want you to move your chair so you're facing Claire. Tell her what you see when you look at her." Peter moved his chair.

"Sometimes when I look at her —" he began, but Marty interrupted him.

"Don't tell us," he said. "Tell Claire."

Peter said, "When I look at you sometimes I see my mother. The thing I remember about my mother is that she liked to punish me. Not physically, but it was punishment just the same. Other times when I look at you I see a little girl."

"I just had a flash," Marty said. "I see Claire as a little girl, too. Why don't you tell us what it was like?"

Claire told us that her mother had died at her birth. Her father had remarried a woman who, if not the cruel stepmother of legend, had interposed herself between father and daughter. "Any time I tried to get through to Dad she was there," Claire said. "I couldn't ever get close to him."

"Let's try a psychodrama," Marty said. He asked Wendell, the oldest man in the group, to play Claire's father, and Maggie, Wendell's wife, to play the stepmother.

(From an earlier conversation, I knew that Wendell and Maggie's own problem was that for twenty years of their marriage, Maggie had made the family decisions; now, she was trying to train herself to hold back while Wendell, who was a professor at the university, made the decisions in his slower and more deliberate way. They had come to Marty not because of this but because their daughter was on drugs.)

Under Marty's direction, Claire and Wendell sat in chairs opposite each other. Maggie stood between them.

"I want to be near you," Claire said to Wendell. "I want to be with you." She put out her hand toward Wendell; Maggie struck it away.

"I want to be with you," Claire repeated, reaching out again toward Wendell. Maggie interposed her body between their hands just as they were about to touch. "No," she said. "No, you can't."

I looked at Peter and saw that he was sitting forward in his chair, absolutely wound up in the little play, nodding as he watched. The drama was clearly assuming realistic emotional power, for after a few minutes more, Claire burst into tears. When Maggie stood back, Claire threw her arms around Wendell's neck and cried on his shoulder. He patted her back.

After she had dried her eyes, Claire turned to Maggie and said, "You seem like a very nice person, but I absolutely hate you and I don't know if I can ever stop hating you."

Maggie laughed and said, "I hope you can stop."

We went on to other things and then came back to Peter and Claire's troubles toward the end of the session. There had been a silence when Harry, the husband of another young couple, turned to Peter and said, "Look, you're married to a woman who thought she was marrying her father. You're tired of being confused with Claire's father, and you're tired of playing torture games around the house. Why don't you just pack up and leave?"

Peter blinked. Then he said, "I just couldn't. There have been times when I've thought about it, but I just couldn't. I don't know why."

"What I hear you saying," Marty said, "is that if you leave Claire or Claire leaves you, the whole world is going to come to an end. Blackness. Disaster. The end of everything. Is that it?"

"Yeah," Peter said. "I guess it is."

"Let me tell you what's happened. You, Peter, have invested Claire with your survival. If she leaves you, then it's disaster and you die. You, Claire, have invested Peter with your survival. If he leaves you, everything's over, *you* die. You have to cut this connection. You have to get the power of survival back into yourself. Each of you has to turn yourself into a whole human being. When you're standing separately, each as a complete individual, then you can come back together again."

Claire pulled up her blouse, exposed a plump breast, and gave suck. Peter looked worried.

I had dinner that night with Marty and his wife Doris, a fine-looking brunette, in their house in the Berkeley hills. We sat at table afterwards, looking down over the splendid spectacle that San Francisco makes after dark, and, with a tape recorder going, talked about *What's the Matter with Marriage Today*. It went like this:

KEN: What are the main sources of trouble in marriages

and families? Are they a product of the world we're living in now? Has it always been the same?

MARTY: I would say that the the problem of marriage today is that people are aware more of what they need and want.

KEN: Their expectations are higher?

MARTY: Their awarenesses are higher because of the industrialized society and the mechanization of our society, and the complexity of our society, and the stresses that our society puts on time and space and energy. Awareness is also higher by comparison to our forefathers, who only lived for the roof over their heads, their meals, time to raise the kids, a good bank account, a nice job, survival, who really didn't look forward to the greater spiritual kind of involvements.

Feelings were — they *were*, but they weren't the base as in the marriages of today, especially in California with the hippie movements, the drug movements and all the new flower children and the awareness and encounter groups that spring up in California. People are becoming more aware of what feelings are. Feelings are the base. If we make the shift from the opportunistic, mechanized, manipulative world of power and control to the world of spiritualism and sense of feeling as your base, then you begin to realize what's not happening in your marriage, where it's dead, where it isn't going. And all of a sudden you say, "Hey —"

DORIS: "I'm being cheated."

MARTY: "— Hey, I'm being cheated. I'm not getting what this nineteen-year-old kid is getting from his girl friend and here I am, just as smart as he is."

DORIS: I think you've hit a valid point, because the feelings have always been there. For thousands of years people have wanted to be loved, admired and respected and so forth. The reason you find such a preponderance of divorces today is this expectation. Nobody's ashamed to say, "I want it." There's such a sexual revolution going on the past five years, paralleling none, really. It's all out in the open now.

Nobody's afraid of exposing feelings and wanting and all the rest.

MARTY: So there's a phenomenon of rule breaking. We're breaking old rules. We're also asserting — I think that's most important, the nature of assertion. We're asserting "I want," "I need," "I want to take you," "I want to enjoy you." There's this kind of feeling. And as a result of that, people are seeing the young people asserting their "I want" intentionality, and they're doing it. So then all of a sudden you begin to feel like a jerk if you don't start asserting *you*.

KEN: Yes.

MARTY: They get all the goodies and —

DORIS: Why be left out?

MARTY: — why be left out, not in the sense of, you know, conforming, but it begins to raise questions about the nature of intimacy.

KEN: When people come to you, what in their eyes are they coming for? What is their complaint? What are their symptoms?

MARTY: Pain.

KEN: Pain expressed how? Pain that expresses itself how?

MARTY: Let's take a look at that group today. You saw that couple today, Peter and Claire. Why did they come? They're bickering, they have power struggles, they're not looking at one another, they're not communicating. The emotional strain is fantastic. They're getting into physical assaults. Life is just one big miserable mess with each other. They're living in absolute trauma. Some people come in on that basis. Some people come in because life is dead, they're just *dead*, the wife is *dead*, the husband is *dead*, nothing is happening. Other people come in because, uh —

DORIS: Johnny's wetting his bed.

MARTY: — Johnny's wetting his bed. Fix Johnny and everything will be okay. Fix my delinquent son. Take care of my daughter, like Wendell and Maggie. That's how they came into therapy. They came in because their daughter was on

drugs. And then they became aware of their own problem. But most people, I would say, come in because they're scared. They've tried everything they know how. It doesn't work. They keep going around in a circle . . .

DORIS: They're all feeling a vacuum somewhere, and each one expresses it a little differently.

MARTY: Their life together really isn't exciting any more, isn't really growth-producing. They don't look to each other to enhance each other any more. Something died along the way. I've thought of myself many times as a family therapist or marital counselor — I've thought my job is almost like to bring life —

DORIS: Resurrect —

MARTY: — to two people who are kind of dying, to really have them become reintroduced, like I want you, Ken, to meet Mary. "This is Mary? Mary?" You know. Mary, meet Ken. "Ken?" You know. All of a sudden really reintroduce each other.

KEN: Let me ask a question that has occurred to me, to which I have no good answer, and you may. If you look at the divorce statistics, you find that California is way ahead of everywhere else. I mean, San Mateo is way up around seventy-five per cent.*

MARTY: What's second?

KEN: I don't know. Marin's somewhere around fifty per cent.† New York is twenty-five. I mean generally California is, let's say, about double the East.

DORIS: Some of the people I know out here are free from immediate family ties. No mother and father, aunts and un-

* Dr. Lynn Townsend White, Jr., a man whose life has been devoted to scholarship and the education of the young, once assured a nervous audience that California's high divorce rate was a measure of the strength of our attachment to home and family. Our dialogues with ourselves frequently assume an unnervingly Orwellian quality.

† This conversation took place in 1969. Since then, as we have noted, the apparent divorce rate in Marin has risen to more than a hundred per cent.

cles peering down their — nobody holding them in check.

MARTY: Nobody holding them in check. They've no source of contact.

DORIS: Contact and ventilation.

MARTY: If the husband has troubles, in New York, he talks to his father. One thing my kids miss, your kids miss — maybe they don't because your family is here to some extent — is that my kids never see their grandparents. So what they miss is — here I am, I'm their father. I was never a little boy. I sure was never a little girl. But if my father and mother were sitting at the table, the kids would say, "What was Dad like as a little boy —"

DORIS: *You* say that. *They* wouldn't say it.

MARTY: I tell them that. They get a picture of continuity, a sense of continuity so that there's a feeling of family which we felt today in this group, there's a feeling of family, that we're a family. There was a sense of family with her feeding — sorry —

DORIS: I didn't say a word.

MARTY: Okay, okay. She's feeding the baby. We argue about the family. We had straight up-front talk, you know. Aggressiveness. There were older people, there were younger people. There was a sense of family. There were generations meeting each other, working out the values. Now I feel that back East you have religion, you have this extended family, this tradition that's been built up. It's a broader perspective. A rabbi talked about it. Tradition he described as: "a tall man can look out, but if you take a midget and put him on top of the tall man he can look further." The concept of tradition is that we build on each other and as we build, hopefully we have greater horizons, and that's the concept he was using.

KEN: I see another aspect of this in terms of the individual growth we've been talking about. Doesn't the presence of family and tradition and so on act to inhibit individual growth also?

MARTY: Yes, that's the other side.

KEN: So you pay a price for the stability that you get.

MARTY: Right. Right.

DORIS: Here, there's a trade-off.

MARTY: I feel there has to be a synthesis of both, and I think this is why our place is so successful and why other places are not. Other places are very successful — I'm talking about money — but we're more successful in the sense that we are coming to grips with individuality and family feeling and we're trying to unify both. We're trying to make room within the framework of the family to grow. That might mean that at a certain phase of a family's life the husband will have to move out for a year to find what it is for himself to feel who he is as a man alone. Which doesn't mean the end of the family. But that's what's going on.

[Doris laughs.]

Or the other way around. The wife has to kind of try things on her own. There has to be a shift. But the family tries to maintain some kind of connection. They don't lose the connection even though there's been a temporary breakdown. It's almost like — I guess what we're saying is that — what we're saying is a very powerful message — we're saying that man has to have a community to live in, to grow in, to develop in. The community acts as a stimulus, as a catharsis, as a place to ventilate, as a place to run away from because of the demand for guilt, whatever the dynamics are. That's his home base. That he can go out and be autonomous, but he can only be alone so long even if it means, like a writer having to be alone or a monk or someone who's a great philosophical genius — they can only be alone so much. You have to come back somewhere. That's his home base, that's like touching down. Now the argument there is that the home base —

DORIS: What do you call home base?

MARTY: — the wife may say, "You come in every two months but you leave for two years. I don't know about this home base." Then the balance. They have to be balanced.

DORIS: It's an enormous problem.

KEN: You've sort of implied, you've suggested to me there may be some changes in our traditional pattern of family dynamics, organization, and so forth, that may be a good thing. I mean, you were talking a few minutes ago that it might be a good thing for the man to go off for a year — regardless of what you think about it, Doris — not as a break, not as a complete separation, but as a temporary regrouping of himself, and so on. Do you think we are actually moving toward a different concept of marriage and the family than the traditional one we've all been brought up with?

MARTY: Yes. I feel we are moving toward a different one. We're right on the line that marriage, the family — especially the family, whether you're married or not — is the basic unit no matter how you look at it, it is the basic unit of man as far as I'm concerned. Now, for example, you look at these communities, these kids living in communities. You really look closely, they try to make a mother and a father, they try to create sisters and brothers. You go to these communities, they say, "This is my brother, these are my brothers, these are my sisters, this is my father, this is my mother." There's an intent constantly to re-create a family structure. Now, the rules of the family structure may be very different than your rules and my rules of how we operate. There may be shit on the floor; they may be fornicating each other; there may be all kinds of orgies; there may be drug scenes; there may be all kinds of "Who cares about you take a bath, you don't take a bath," or "Who cares about you wear a tie, you don't wear a tie," like this guy today, you know, but the feeling of family, the sense of connection is there. I think in a way what these kids are saying, they're pointing the way to the new sense of family, the new creation of family is to make more available to the person within the family that which is not available presently. In order to have this autonomy we'll have to go elsewhere. The kids are saying — I think they're offering us the direction without knowing it. You can do it, but in one

house, within the house, but you got to break your old framework to do it. So that means that —

DORIS: I'm not clear about that.

MARTY: Okay.

DORIS: In a really workable solution I'm not clear about that. It's kind of philosophical to me.

MARTY: Okay. We're talking — what's that called? — programmatically.

DORIS: I guess I'm a realist.

MARTY: Okay. How can man, if he reaches a certain point in his life, how can he continue to express his autonomy?

DORIS: I gather you mean by that women too, I mean when you say —

MARTY: Yeah, yeah. Both. I'm talking about both now. How can they cease to be in opposition to one another without pulling the family apart, without tearing the individual self-system apart?

DORIS: I don't know. I live with the illusion perhaps that the growth and the autonomy of each member of the family, it turns eventually into something very beautiful. We think it's going to hurt the family structure and that each one is running away from one another, but if it's done in a manner that each one regards one another and respects the total unity, it develops on their own, that this is really where we're going.

I enjoyed Marty and Doris, and we kept talking for quite a while longer and finished the wine and had another scotch. Some days later I sat down and wrote the article for *Life* and mailed it to New York. About a week later, the editor phoned. He was unhappy. It wasn't, he said, that there weren't a lot of interesting things in what I'd written, but somehow he couldn't identify with much of anything in the article.

What was the trouble? I asked.

Well, he said, the difficulties that he and his wife had with

each other didn't seem to match at all with the troubles that married couples seemed to have out there in California.

This wasn't, of course, all that was the matter with the article, and when I went back and rewrote it, it came out even worse.

The editor's comment on the telephone, however, stuck in my mind because I think he was right. Our marriages and our families are different out here, and not the least of the differences is, as Marty Kirschenbaum said, that we have escaped from the traditional external enemies of a marriage. The result seems to be that we have developed a clear tendency to devour ourselves, and we have made true the mad vision of mad old William Blake, who wrote that *A man's worst enemies are those / Of his own house and family.*

12. *Four O'Clock in the Morning*

After Elmo and his wife broke up, she went back East, where she found a good job in her profession. Elmo moved into a shack behind a modest house in Mill Valley.

The shack was only a single room with just the bare amenities. Elmo cooked on an electric plate. The sink was usually covered with dirty dishes. Below the sink was a pile of empty gallon wine jugs. There was an old desk and two typewriters. One chair. A bed. Elmo's clothes hung from a rope stretched across the far corner of the room.

Elmo is a middle-aged man, full-bearded and heavier than he ought to be, a carpenter by trade and a poet by vocation. When I came to visit him on a Sunday afternoon, he was sitting at the desk, typing a letter and drinking wine. He

poured me a glass from a gallon jug of California white and invited me to sit on the bed.

The oil mishap at Santa Barbara was on Elmo's mind. "We're a cancer," he said, "a goddamn cancer on the face of the earth.* We multiply like malignant cells, a billion of us one day and two billion the next, destroying everything around us. Did you see the photo of that bird on the beach?"

I said I hadn't.

"It was a damn impressive bird," he said. "With its long neck it looked like a grebe but you couldn't see its markings because its feathers were completely covered with oil. It was clean oil, and the bird's body glittered in the sunlight as if it had been carved from some black rock and then polished. Absolutely the only part of the bird that wasn't coated with oil was its eye, a bright red eye set like a precious stone in its shining black head. I'd like to think the eye was filled with hatred for us but I can't quite believe it. The grebe should have been radiating hatred, but hatred is too human. What I did see in it was an absolutely terrifying dignity, the sort of dignity that I don't think any of us is capable of anymore."

I said that we didn't deserve much consideration. We'd overdrawn our account, and someday when we were least expecting it we were going to have to make good.

"You're goddamn right," Elmo said. "When it happens it's not going to be pretty. We're going to go whining and sobbing and crying, 'Dear God, why are you doing this to me? It wasn't my fault.'"

After a while Elmo asked, "Do you remember what Swift said? It was something about odious vermin. 'The most odious race of vermin that God ever suffered to crawl on the face of the earth.' Do I have it right?"

I said I thought it was right, or close enough anyway.

Elmo took one of my cigarettes and lighted it. He said he

* I wonder if it is absolute coincidence that the physician's symbol for cancer, Ca, is also the post office abbreviation for California.

hadn't had a cigarette for a week. It wasn't a matter of health but of cash. He'd rather, he said, spend his money on wine.

I asked how things had been going with him.

"I survive," he said. "I don't have to take any shit from anybody. I manage to stay clear of most of the terrors of civilization. I can let my paranoia run loose without apologizing for it. It gets lonely, of course. When you're living by yourself, four o'clock in the morning can almost drive you out of your mind."

I said that at four in the morning, the only thing that mattered at all was a warm body in bed.

We talked for a while longer and drank some more wine before I went home.

A couple of months later, Elmo bought a used car for one hundred seventy-five dollars, packed one of his typewriters, his carpenter's tools, and his clothes in the trunk and headed north. His first letter said he was living on an island in the Straits of Georgia, in British Columbia, just off the coast of Vancouver Island. He was building a house for some people we both know.

The natives, he said, were unhurried, direct, and not destructive. The local liquor was a Canadian rye called Seagram's Five Star. You could pick up all the oysters and clams you wanted on the beach, and Toby beer was cheap. He was living in a tent with a wood floor, and he thought he'd stay there for a while. He'd met a woman he liked.

He didn't say, however, how things were for him at four o'clock in the morning.

13. *How to Be Happy*

While I was engaged in writing this book I received a Christmas message from George Bach, a clinical psychologist I know who operates out of the Institute of Group Psychotherapy in Beverly Hills. I give the text in full:

Dear Friends:

The year 1969, the 16th birthday of our Institute, was a time of many innovations.

We now hold an "Open House" information group Tuesdays at 8:30 P.M.

In our new Children's "Fight Class" youngsters six to twelve learn how to turn sibling rivalry into creative experience, which also helps to resolve conflicts with parents and teachers.

Another first, the "Unwedding" is a beautifully sad ceremony in which broken marriages are dissolved creatively instead of punitively.

We also have a new Fight Class for Singles and Divorces.

These new programs, generated by the 1969 "class" of participants, emerged from experiences gained in working with former participants such as you.

The staff members of the Institute want you to know that your participation was appreciated.

May your Holidays be joyful and the New Year bring continued personal growth to you and your loved ones.

With a cordial caress,
George R. Bach

P.S. Dr. Bach is scheduled to appear on T.V. Channel 11 "To Tell the Truth," Monday, December 15, at 6:30 P.M.

I met George Bach a couple of years ago. I had been led to him by my hypothesis that, because the more far-out forms of psychotherapy — marathon therapy, Synanon, the Esalen Institute, nude therapy, and feeling therapy — are all California inventions, they must have something to tell us about the civilization that produced them.

The night before I joined a marathon that was to take place under his direction we had dinner in a Chinese restaurant in Beverly Hills. A native of Riga, Latvia, and a Ph.D. from the University of Iowa, George is short, plump, extroverted, tanned, white-haired, uninhibited, warm, charismatic, and immensely voluble. He is an enthusiast, a missionary whose gospel is that of the overriding necessity for human beings to achieve openness and transparency in their dealings with each other. Besides marathons, he promotes weekly fight clinics, in which couples are trained to combat each other constructively, and he is the author of a book called *Intimate Enemy*, which is a handbook of conjugal guerrilla warfare.

As we drank a couple of scotches and ate shrimp-and-vegetables, George explained to me that the point of the marathon was to bring about permanent changes in the behavior of the participants by breaking down their usual defenses through simple fatigue and the workings of group pressure.

"Five years ago when Fred Stoller and I invented the marathon, our wives thought we were crazy," he told me. "We'd been carrying on weekend retreats out in Palm Springs, but we found out that in a group session of ordinary length it was too easy for some of the people to put off really leveling with the rest of the group. The pressure never really built up to the point where they dropped their defenses and stopped playing games or going off into great safaris into their pasts.

"Well, we decided to try running a group without any

breaks except for food. We didn't have the least idea how it would turn out. Maybe half the people there would have bad trips and come out of it depressed and even suicidal. Thank God that wasn't what happened. The marathon worked."

George went on to say that the marathon, which was usually scheduled to run for twenty-four hours but sometimes went on for longer, was a psychological pressure-cooker in which genuine emotions were forced to break out of their protective shells of status and image and social convention. When I reminded him that at a meeting of the American Group Psychotherapy Association, February 1968, Dr. S. R. Slavson, one of the founders of that organization, had warned against the potential dangers of marathon and some of the newer forms of group therapy, George waved his arms and raised his voice. (Dr. Slavson had said, among other things, "Obviously, latent or borderline psychotics with tenuous ego controls and defenses may, under the stress of such groups and the complete giving up of defense, jump the barrier between sanity and insanity.")

"Slavson doesn't have any idea what he's talking about," George declared heatedly. "We've devoted a lot of energy to research and we know what we're talking about. When we started, we were getting maybe ten per cent bad trips. Now it's one or two per cent."

The next day, as the marathon approached, I found myself feeling thoroughly depressed for no good reason that I could explain. It was a sort of free-floating depression that attached itself to whatever was handy, and as I looked down from the balcony of my dreadful room on the twelfth floor of a dreadful Los Angeles-style hotel, I was reminded of George's comment that some people, even though a comparative few, come out of a marathon in deep depression. I didn't feel at all comfortable about taking this chance and would have been happy for an excuse to pack up and go back home.

A little before ten in the evening I presented myself at the

Bachs' Mediterranean-style villa on a hillside street in Hollywood. I was welcomed by George's wife, Peggy, a painter and art historian who acts as her husband's co-therapist. A slender, handsome woman, wearing a black outfit of blouse and slacks, she introduced me to the other participants by their first names as we gathered in her vaulted living room. (The anonymity of first names is a condition of marathon, as it not only encourages candor but also acts as a social equalizer between the movie star and the saleswoman.) With one exception, the women were wearing slacks with sweaters or blouses. The men too tended toward slacks and sweaters.

As we drank coffee and waited for George, who had been detained at a speaking engagement at a church, I exchanged notes with my neighbor, an attractive but rather brittle-looking woman in her forties named Paula. It was, I confessed, my first marathon. Paula told me she had done three or four marathons already. She and her husband, who was also present, were leaving town the next week and they thought it was important to take part in another marathon while they had the chance.

I told her I was a little concerned at the prospect of staying awake for twenty-four more hours. "Oh, you won't have any trouble," she told me. "Once it starts, the time goes by so fast you'll be surprised how soon it ends." Paula knew some of the other people there — there were eight women and seven men — having met them at previous marathons. Others, I gathered, took part in George's regular group therapy sessions.

George arrived, bouncing into the room as he greeted people he knew and introduced himself to the one or two he didn't know. It was clear that this was to be George's show and that he would be the impresario, the stage manager, the gadfly, the agent provocateur.

After changing his suit for slacks and a persimmon-colored sweater, George reminded us of the ten commandments of the marathon, which we had been asked to study before coming.

Boiled down somewhat, these are that everybody would stay until the end, that only George and Peggy would be allowed to take naps, that physical assault was forbidden but brutal frankness was encouraged, that no booze or drugs were allowed, that openness, transparency, and intimacy were the watchwords, and that our behavior in the group itself and not our standing in the outside world was the only matter of importance. In addition, there were housekeeping details, such as the presence of a buffet in the dining room, an interdiction of dawdling in the bathroom, and the rule that whenever anybody left his seat somebody else would take it in order to keep the group constantly changing.

The marathon began with each person taking the "hot seat," which happened to be in front of the fireplace, for two minutes to describe what he expected to gain from taking part. It became clear that our aspirations were a large order to be coped with in only twenty-four hours. Liz, a woman of about forty, and Sherry, a strikingly constructed girl in her twenties, were each recovering from the shock and dislocation of recent separations that they expected to lead to divorce. Deborah, also young and attractive, was in much the same situation. Paula, the woman with whom I'd been talking, and her husband, Max, were trying to salvage their twenty-year-old marriage. Clint was having trouble with his third wife. Gene was depressed by the loss of his mistress. Cathy, who felt overshadowed by her successful husband, was trying to find her own identity. Karl and Amy were concerned about whether or not they should marry each other. Margot, the least attractive woman present, had never had a satisfying relationship with a man. There were three persons with nonmarital problems. Molly, who looked barely old enough to be out of high school, turned out to be a twenty-four-year-old who was trying to find out who she was. Sig, an experienced marathoner, was following the road of self-realization. Otis, too, said he wanted to learn more about himself.

When it came my turn, I told the group about my generally depressed condition and went on to say that, in the context of the marathon's goal of open communication, I had sometimes regretted using a too-easy glibness and a cocktail party variety of charm to fend off intimacy when it was offered. (We Californians are surely more vulnerable than anybody else when we are accused of not being honestly and genuinely and truly sincere and open and receptive.)

Like private confession, public confession has its form and rituals. Some, such as psychodrama and the dialogue, are common currency in the group therapy movement. Others, such as the "haircut," have their roots in the games played in Synanon groups. (A "haircut" is a direct attack by one person on another. The victim is not allowed to defend himself.) There is also a specialized language: to *level* is to speak with absolute sincerity; *feedback* is criticism; to *gunnysack* is to pack away grievances; to *museum* is to wander back through the debris of one's psychological history; to *red-cross* is to give aid and comfort to somebody under attack, and is not encouraged.

About midnight, after some preliminary skirmishing, Paula and her husband became involved in a dialogue. George directed Paula and Max to sit facing each other, their knees a couple of feet apart, in two straight-backed chairs in the center of the room. Tall, slender, and dark, Max was the only person in the group who gave signs of being there under compulsion. The reason for his presence under duress became apparent as soon as Paula began to talk. She was angry to the point of threatening divorce.

"I don't think you're ever going to change," she told him. (George stood behind her as she talked, his hand on her shoulder, a sort of psychic prompter, urging her to go on whenever she hesitated.) "I've about given up hope, I really have. I simply can't stand any more of your damn smugness. There you are, the great big important colonel who never makes a mistake. It's always somebody else who makes the mistakes,

never you. When you come home, it's the same thing. You never listen to me. Aren't you ever going to listen to what I say to you?"

Max said, "I'm listening right now." (George moved behind his chair.) "I do try to listen to you, Paula. I listen very hard, but I can't respond the way you want me to because your demands don't have anything to do with reality."

"Oh God!" Paula cried, holding her head in her hands. She lifted her head and said, "They don't have anything to do with *your* reality. But what about *my* reality? Don't you ever let yourself consider that my reality is just as important to me as your reality is to you? Just because I don't command a bomber with a hydrogen bomb in it doesn't mean that I'm not real. Whenever I talk to you I get the feeling that your mind is fifty thousand feet in the air."

"I don't know what I can do that I'm not already doing," Max said. "I do try to listen to you. But I don't think I'm at fault if I don't understand what you really mean."

"You don't ever try to understand me," Paula said. Her hands were in her lap now, fingers intertwined, knuckles tight. "I'll bet you can't remember anything I've ever said to you."

Max said, "But I can. I remember a great deal you've said. I remember that last week you told me that if I didn't come to this marathon you were going to see a lawyer. So I came with you, even though I couldn't believe that talking for another twenty-four hours would do us any good."

"I'll bet you can't remember anything else."

"I remember your telling me that you had to have a life of your own that didn't have anything to do with the air force. I told you that was fine, that I understood, that I thought it would be a good thing if you got a job in town, off the base. And you said that was fine but the trouble was that nobody wanted to hire a middle-aged woman who'd forgotten all the typing and shorthand she'd ever known. You said the only job you could get would be behind the counter at the five-and-ten. I told you that a colonel's wife couldn't work at Wool-

worth's. And you blew up and locked yourself in the bedroom for the rest of the night."

"That's exactly what I mean," Paula said triumphantly. "You never try to understand. If you'd tried to understand you'd know that I didn't really mean I was going to get a job at the five-and-ten."

"But that's what you said," Max objected. "How can I understand you if you don't say what you mean? If you didn't mean you wanted to work at Woolworth's, what *did* you mean?"

Paula said, "If you'd listened to me instead of playing Great Big Important Colonel, you would have found out what I meant. What I was going to tell you was that I want to go to State College and get a teaching credential. I want a career of my own. I want to be a schoolteacher."

Max looked puzzled. "Why didn't you say so?"

"You didn't give me a chance," Paula said, breaking into tears. Somebody gave her a box of tissues and George let her cry for a while. Then he said, "All right, it's time to negotiate." He took Paula's hand. "Tell us what you want Max to agree to."

"I want Max to try to understand why I have to go to college and become a teacher. I want him to listen to me when I come home from school. I want him to help me and support me, and when he's with me I want him to stop thinking about the air force."

"Can you agree to that?" George asked Max.

Max nodded. "Sure," he said.

"Paula wants to hear you say it," George said.

With some prompting, Max repeated the terms of the negotiation. "I will try to understand why Paula has to go to college and become a teacher . . ."

"Now kiss her," George said when Max was through.

Max stood up, bent down to Paula's face and kissed her lightly and rather formally. She looked appeased. They got up and sat down together on a couch. Self-consciously, Max put

his arm around Paula's shoulders. She smiled, but a little thinly.

After a moment's silence, Cathy, a pleasant-looking young woman, said to Max, "I think you're a dreadful person. I don't think you mean a word of what you've said. You've done it just to keep Paula quiet. You're not leveling. I hate liars."

"I'm not a liar," Max said stiffly.

"Oh, yes, you are," Cathy said. "You're trying to tell me that colonels don't lie, but I'm telling you that colonels lie just like anybody else."

"I don't have anything to say to you," Max said.

Cathy looked angry.

Clint, tall and bushy-haired, said, "Now, just a minute. Let's not assume that Paula's all right and Max is all wrong. I went through something like this with my second wife. It's easy to say that Max is a heel because he won't let Paula do what she wants to do, but what I want to know is this: does Paula really want to become a teacher, or is this just a game to put Max on the defensive?"

"I really want to be a teacher," Paula said.

"I'm afraid I don't believe you," Clint said.

"Why don't you believe her?" Cathy asked.

"Just because I don't," Clint said. "Furthermore, I think you're a stupid castrating bitch."

"Maybe that's your problem," Cathy said.

"Maybe it is," Clint agreed.

A little later, I found myself involved in a psychodrama as a result of having brought up a recent argument about money with my wife. George urged me to pick as my partner in the little play the woman present who most resembled my spouse. I picked Cathy because, like my wife, she is dark-haired and plump and because I admired her fighting style.

We took off from the financial quarrel and had a spirited interchange about the rights and duties of husbands and

wives. Alas, if my goal really was to achieve openness, I committed a mortal sin by letting myself be carried away to the point of inventing a couple of monster children who had no resemblance to my own three, and, picking up a cue that Cathy tossed me, playing the part of a ferociously Victorian husband and father, a sort of Theobald Pontifex translated into twentieth-century California. After Cathy and I had run out of steam, Paula and Liz told me what an obnoxious person I was, and from what the others contributed it became clear that among the women I had nominated myself as the least popular candidate for any sort of intimacy.

Yet, in spite of my guilt at having lied to the group, I found I was feeling a good deal better. Whether it was simply the benevolent effect of adrenalin being released or of some more subtle psychic process, my depression was lifting. Something, at any rate, was going on, for a little later I found myself talking at length about matters that have caused me real pain and that I wouldn't have conceived a few hours earlier of bringing up to anybody except the closest of my friends.

At three o'clock, George told us that he and Peggy were going to bed for four hours in order that they would be as alert as possible during the coming day. We were to be on our own until seven.

There was a general air of irritation and dissatisfaction after the Bachs left. I was beginning to feel tired and not particularly happy at having exposed myself. Judging from the quarrelsomeness of the group, some of the others were feeling the same way. We jockeyed around, psychically speaking, for a while without getting much of anywhere, until suddenly Margot screeched, "Goddamn it, I'm part of this group too, and I want somebody to listen to me. All I've been hearing is about married people, married people, married people. Well, I don't give a damn about you married people. I want to talk about me."

"Nobody's been hogging the floor," Otis told her. He was a

strong-featured man with close-cropped yellow hair. "If you want to talk about yourself, why don't you just speak up? You don't have to get all uptight and make a speech about it."

"If I talk to you, will you listen to me?" Margot asked.

"I don't know," Otis said. "Every time you've opened your mouth tonight you've been a real bitch. I don't know if I want to hear any more from you."

"God, I hate you," Margot said.

"It's mutual," Otis told her.

Sig spoke up. "Now that you've got that out of the way, why don't you give Margot a chance to talk?"

Margot looked at Sig fiercely, as if, in spite of his help, she knew that he really belonged to the enemy.

"Go on," Sig urged her. "Nobody's going to interrupt you."

A tall, big-boned woman with heavy legs, the only woman there who was wearing a dress, Margot was not in fact a particularly prepossessing female. She was at her worst when her face was ugly with anger. She told us that her main trouble was that, although she liked men, she'd never had a close friendship with a man. She knew she wasn't attractive but she felt she had a lot of love to give.

"The love certainly isn't showing tonight," Sig said.

"How can it?" Margot cried. "Every time I try to make friends with a man, he runs away as if I had leprosy or something."

"Judging from what I've seen of you, I don't blame them," Sig said.

"You can say that again," Otis said. "One brush with you and I'd run for the hills."

Margot began to cry noisily. She went all in a heap in her chair. Liz brought her the box of Kleenex; she sobbed into the tissues for a while. When she was through, she was red of eye and puffy around the cheeks, but she spoke in a much better voice.

"I want you all to level with me," she said. "I want every man in the room to tell me if he finds me at all sexually attractive." She turned toward the nearest man, who happened to be Max, the air force colonel.

Max looked uncomfortable. He pursed his lips and looked steadily at Margot for a while. Then he said, "I don't find you at all attractive right now. If you took better care of yourself and had somebody help you pick your clothes, you wouldn't be unattractive. But I don't think it's just a matter of looks. You'll never get a man to feel warmly toward you so long as you come at us as if we were the enemy."

"Thank you," Margot said. As she went around the circle, the other men answered much as Max had. She accepted our comments quietly, and as her face lost its flush she did in fact begin to look more attractive.

Otis was the last of the men, and as Margot reached him, she said, "I'm curious what you're going to say."

Otis shook his head. "I can't tell you if you're sexually attractive or not. You see, I only like boys."

Nobody noticed the dawn. While the sun came up we talked about Molly and Deborah and why, though they were almost exactly the same age, Deborah seemed several years older. Karl had stretched out on the floor and closed his eyes. When Amy noticed that he was asleep, she leaned down and pinched the lobe of an ear. He sighed, opened his eyes, and drew himself up. "Oh God," he said, "I feel like the whole Sahara Desert had got under my eyelids." He got up heavily and went into the dining room to get some coffee.

It turned out that breakfast was just then being set out by the Bachs' houseman. There were fruit juice, scrambled eggs and bacon, coffee and toast. George and Peggy came downstairs, looking somewhat refreshed.

George, who was wearing a jogging outfit, announced that anybody who wanted to come along with him on his morning jog was welcome. Molly and Karl joined him, and they went

into the hillside streets while the rest of the group drank more coffee. Then Sig, who had been studying yoga, gathered the rest of us outside by the swimming pool, where he put us through some deep-breathing exercises.

When we again came together in the living room, George, who had changed from his jogging outfit back into sweater and slacks, raised the issue of what the group ought to do next. Before we had got very far in this discussion, Karl said to him, "Let me level with you. I don't like to see you pawing young girls."

It turned out that George and Molly had engaged in some horseplay, mauling each other as they jogged along.

"Well," George said cheerfully, "that's just the way I am. I like touching people. I like girls."

"I still don't like it," Karl said. "There's something about the spectacle of a middle-aged man like you laying hands on a young woman that makes me uncomfortable."

"What I don't like," Sig said, "is the idea that you're taking advantage of your position of authority, and maybe the girl is putting up with it because you're the great Dr. Bach."

George whooped joyfully. "A palace revolution!" he cried. "Always we have a palace revolution. Now, let us ask Molly. Tell us, Molly, was I taking advantage of you?"

"We were just hitting each other," Molly said. "We were just having fun. Honest."

"You see?" George asked triumphantly.

Karl shook his head. "I'm not just talking about Molly. I'm talking about all the other people you're always laying hands on."

"Perhaps the trouble isn't me," George suggested. "Perhaps the trouble is you. You're holding yourself in; you think there's something evil about establishing physical contact with another human being."

"Perhaps that's true," Karl said. "I still don't like it. What does Peggy think?"

"Let us ask Peggy," George said. "Let us ask the beautiful

and intelligent and understanding Peggy.” He turned grandly to his wife of twenty-eight years with whom he boasts of having carried on several thousand constructive domestic fights. “What do you think about this grave accusation, Peggy?”

“I don’t mind seeing you kiss other women, but when you put your hands on their breasts or in their crotches, I think it’s disgusting,” Peggy said crisply.

George gave signs of extreme combative pleasure. “A real palace revolution! Everybody is against me! Even my beautiful and loving wife! Hah!” He sat down, smiling, and threw his arms wide in the air. “What are we to do about this situation?” He folded his arms and looked penitent. “I am sorry. I am not sorry for myself; I can’t help that. But I am sorry if I distress you. I will try to control my evil nature. I will try not to be a dirty old man. Is that all right with everybody?” He looked around and, satisfied, said, “Now that we have settled this extremely important matter, what are we going to do next?”

What happened next was that Deborah gave Sherry a haircut. They were both good-looking girls in their early twenties, both separated from their husbands. They had been together in previous therapy groups, and until then they had seemed to be on extraordinarily good terms with each other.

Deborah was slender, dark, and intense. Sherry, who had one of those lush Southern California figures and a soft, pretty, self-indulgent face, had been sitting cross-legged on a couch, her shoulders thrown back, clearly inviting the men’s admiration. The two girls went over and sat in the straight chairs in front of the fireplace.

“I’ve been getting sick to my stomach with the show you’ve been putting on for the men,” Deborah said. “You keep coiling and uncoiling yourself on the couch as if you were the sultan’s favorite slave girl or something. What did you come here for, anyway, to look for a quick pickup? Well, any man who went home with you would be out of his mind. All you

are is a squashy, bosomy body and there's nothing inside at all. You make me puke."

When she paused, George rose from where he had been squatting by the hearth and, taking Deborah's right hand in his, held it so that her index finger pointed accusingly at Sherry.

"Furthermore . . ." George urged.

"Furthermore," Deborah said, "whenever you say anything it's always about yourself and how attractive you are to men and what a tragedy it is that your husband wasn't satisfied with the great precious snatch that you offered him and instead got involved with another woman. Well, I don't blame him at all. What he couldn't stand was never hearing you say anything but me-me-me-me. Me-me-me-me-me. Me-me-me-me-me-me."

"Furthermore . . ." George urged.

"Furthermore," Deborah began, and then stopped. "I guess I've said what I wanted to say."

Sherry cried.

At ten in the morning the group threatened to bog down. About half — the men who had brought razors and clean shirts, the women who had changed their outfits and freshened their faces — looked comparatively spruce. The real feeling of the group, however, was carried by the rest of us, who were beginning to look seedy and rumped. Otis, the man who had sexual feelings only for boys, complained twice that he'd paid his ninety-dollar fee like everybody else but was getting nothing from the group. Margot had reverted to bitchiness and managed to throw verbal obstructions into every promising beginning. Paula called Max up again for another dialogue that didn't seem to get much of anywhere except to demonstrate her conviction that her husband wasn't being sincere, that he wasn't leveling, and that he had no honest intention of changing his high-handed ways.

At that time, with the marathon halfway through its

course, the prospect of any of us coming anywhere near the goals we had set didn't seem at all promising. I myself was feeling tired and cranky and thoroughly skeptical of the Bachian theory of the benevolent effects of fatigue. Remembering George's comparison of the marathon to a psychic pressure-cooker, I was prepared to argue that, as sometimes happens with pressure-cookers, the outcome would be a soggy mess. We had, clearly, achieved a level of intimacy that doesn't come out of the usual dinner party or even the day-to-day contact between people working in the same office, but it didn't seem to be an intimacy that would lead anywhere worth going.

On looking around the group, I found myself reacting strongly to each of the people. I rather resented Dr. Bach, with his obvious pleasure in his virtuoso performances, but increasingly liked his wife, who displayed a nice gift for abrasiveness ("I thought what you just said was pretty slimy"). Margot, I decided, thoroughly deserved her lonely state. Paula was a specimen of tyrannous virtue. Clint thought he was too damned clever by far. Gene, a bearded, pipe-smoking man who had something to do with television, was the most distasteful of all. Fast with his footwork, he had managed to avoid giving away anything at all about himself except that he was a pretty important fellow and that he felt an inordinate amount of nobility in bringing a recent love affair to an end. I felt sympathetic toward Max; I liked Deborah, who had a nice straightforward style; and Cathy remained an attractive type, although she bounced alarmingly from niceness to brutality and back again. Of all of them, I felt most warmly toward Liz, and, on looking back, I think it wasn't only because she was a good-looking woman who was troubled and who was appealing for help, but because her behavior actually had been changing for the better. There was, perhaps, hope for the rest of us.

Sometime during the long reaches of the night, Liz had asked if she could tell us about her troubles. Just a couple of

weeks earlier, she said, she had found out that her husband had been carrying on with another woman. She had ordered him out of the house. Since then she had been torn between a conviction of her own rightness and acute feelings of loneliness and fears for the future. When she began to cry, her face seemed to dissolve into an appalling mess of self-pity.

We had been stern and critical with Liz for her self-pity but had told her that a new world was opening up and that what she made of this world was the only thing that should be concerning her now. (Even in therapy groups we fall back on clichés when faced by the real crises of living.)

After a good cry, Liz looked much more cheerful. Now, eight hours later, she showed no signs of reverting to tears. Instead, when one of the other separated women spoke bitterly of her husband's running around after another woman, Liz said briskly, "Oh, come on now. When I first found out about *my* husband, I was sure he'd been chasing some sexy young chick who probably looked like Marilyn Monroe. Well, when I finally saw her she turned out to be a quiet woman of about my own age. She wasn't even as good-looking as I am." Liz laughed. "Maybe that was what hurt most of all."

Paula had been right when she had told me how fast the twenty-four hours would go by. George, sensing the general grogginess and warning us that we really didn't have much time left, took the men out to the poolside patio, where we drank beer and talked man-talk. The women stayed indoors with Peggy Bach.

The surprise of the poolside session was Otis, who for the first time began to talk about himself and his troubles in a world dominated by heterosexuals. The police generally left you alone, he told us, if you did your thing in the gay bars and other institutionalized meeting places of the homosexual community, but if you liked young boys you were fair game. He went on for quite a while, and as he talked his manner became less brittle and hostile, and even Max, who had

shown a good deal of antipathy toward Otis, drew himself into the conversation. After we went back to the living room, it became clear that something had changed in Otis's relations with the group as a whole. Before he had been tight and defensive with the women; now he seemed relaxed and, well, open and transparent. Cathy and Doris told him what an attractive person he really was.

After lunch — fried chicken, ham, and salad — we started down the home stretch with more dialogues and more hair-cuts and a drama or two. There were a couple of casualties. Gene simply disappeared after he had been told by virtually everybody present what an uptight and generally disagreeable person he was. When he protested that in the real world he didn't have any trouble communicating openly with people, particularly with women, there had been a burst of unbelieving laughter from the women present.

As the afternoon went on, Margot became increasingly shrill, unreasonable, and stubborn. Several people suggested firmly to her that if she didn't have anything more useful to say it would be much better if she kept her mouth shut. Finally Clint said, "Goddamn it, Margot, if you went out and cut your throat, I don't think anybody here would waste a tear on you."

Margot got up and went into the music room for her coat and purse. We watched her go to the front door and leave.

Liz, looking alarmed, said to Clint, "That was cruel."

Clint shrugged. "If we let her go on, she'd turn this into a bad trip for all of us."

"I think we ought to find out if she's going home or what," Liz said. "She may really be doing something serious."

"Like suicide?" Peggy Bach asked.

"Oh God," Clint said with disgust.

"You didn't have to suggest it to her," Liz said.

"Margot is *not* going to kill herself," George said. "You must not worry about her."

"I'm not convinced," Liz said, but we went on to something else.

Margot came back in about half an hour. She left her coat and purse in the music room and sat down in a corner. She was very quiet.

At the end, each of us was judged by a jury of four other people whom we had chosen ourselves. How open and transparent had we been in the course of the marathon? Had our behavior actually changed? Did the change seem to be a real one that might be permanent?

As the judging went on, it became apparent that there weren't going to be many surprises. We *had* come to know each other pretty well, having penetrated at least the first layer of social defenses. Otis was congratulated on overcoming his initial uptightness. Cathy told Max that she still didn't like him and didn't see much hope for him in the future. Liz was told to go forth and blossom in her new life. I was urged to keep working at becoming more open and transparent but the consensus was that I had a long way to go.

The last person to be judged was George himself. Finding myself on his jury, I took the occasion to tell him that in spite of the skill with which he had led us through the marathon, I thought he was at least half charlatan, with a vast talent for exhibitionism and showmanship. The other half, I conceded, probably contained some genius.

George responded with good humor and irony, declaring with a flourish that a bent for showmanship was part of himself and that he couldn't act otherwise. He went on to say that it had been a good marathon, in spite of our tendency to intellectualize our problems instead of responding to them directly with our feelings. He asked us to join Peggy and himself in a love feast to celebrate the end of the marathon and to bridge our return to the world outside.

The buffet dinner centered on roast beef and several bottles

of a good burgundy. Somebody turned on music and Clint and Deborah danced. Sig and Sherry became involved in an intense private conversation. Max and Paula ate together in apparent domestic contentment. Most of the rest sat on the floor around a coffee table. Margot sat by herself.

On looking around the room I found that, now that the marathon was about to break up, I felt an extraordinary sense of concern about all my companions of twenty-four hours. I cared, and cared strongly, that Liz and Deborah and Sherry should find their ways out of the debris of their marriages, and that Otis should make a better accommodation with the straight world, and that Karl and Amy should make the right decision about whether to get married or not. For myself, I felt a grateful sense of release from the depression that had blackened my mood at the beginning. To this extent, at least, the marathon had been a success for me. (Looking back on it now, however, I am obliged to add that I can detect no evidence that there has been any change in my behavior. I am still as quick as ever to throw up a defensive verbal screen whenever my privacy seems threatened.)

Taking my plate and my glass of wine, I sat down next to Margot in her corner. She told me she thought the marathon had been a waste of time and money. Nobody had cared about her and her problems. I told her that, on the contrary, when she'd walked out, the group had been upset and worried about her. She looked surprised, but then went on, "I still don't think this was a good marathon. I wonder why nothing ever seems to work for me. Nothing ever seems to work."

The love feast broke up between nine and ten. George put on a jacket and a Nehru cap and prepared to take his dog for a walk. He paused at the door, where I was saying goodbye to Peggy, and said, "Three or four more marathons and you won't recognize yourself." Then, Nehru cap on head and dog on leash, he trotted briskly down the road, leaving each of us to find his own way back into the greater world outside.

Several months later, after getting the Christmas letter describing the unwedding ceremony, I called George up to find out what this was all about.

“When a marriage starts to break up, if one of the partners has a deep fear of terminating the marriage, it can be very dangerous. This is how murders begin,” he told me on the phone. “I call this the autumn leaf phenomenon. You know, the last leaf that clings to the tree until a blast of wind blows it away. The unwedding ceremony acts as the wind blower. It often boils down to convincing the more reluctant partner that parting isn’t really so terrible. Then we have a successful parting.”

George went on to say that he had unwed about a dozen couples since inventing the ceremony. He was now thinking about adapting it for use by the churches. When I asked him to tell me what actually went on, he declined to describe the unwedding, inviting me instead to come down to his place and see for myself.

I’ve thought about it a couple of times but I haven’t gone down to see him yet.

14. It Takes a Little While for It to Get Through to You

For some reason that isn’t entirely clear to me, when I wake up at about two-thirty in the morning and fret about things, which I have a habit of doing, I am often reminded of the disaster that happened to Dave. The reason, I suppose, is that it contained so much both of the casual beauty and of the black doom that is characteristic of life in California.

I heard about the disaster from Martha, who had been separated from Dave for about a year. She phoned me on a

pleasant Sunday morning to tell me that the house in which Dave had been living out at Stinson Beach had burned down during the night. Although Dave had got out all right, he'd left everything behind in his second-floor apartment in the burning house. Martha thought that maybe I could call Dave's literary agent in New York (she happens also to be my agent) and find out if Elizabeth could raise some money for him in the way of a publisher's advance. Knowing a little of Dave's finances, I suggested that he was probably already up to his ears in advances. How close, I asked Martha, was he to finishing the book he'd been working on for the past two years?

"The manuscript and all his notes went up in the fire," Martha said. "It was the only copy he had."

I said, "Oh." I told Martha I'd try to think of something useful to do, and hung up.

About five minutes later, I called Martha back and said that the only sensible thing seemed to be to take some clothes to Dave and commiserate with him and worry about money later. She said fine, she'd see me at Stinson later in the day.

When I got there Dave was sitting in the patio of the ruined house, talking to some friends and neighbors, among whom was one of the volunteer firemen who'd put out the fire. The walls of the house still stood, but everything inside had been burned out. An obscene smell hung around the place, as if there were a body inside, and I was reminded of villages I'd gone through on Okinawa during the war.

For a man who'd almost been burned up, Dave looked pretty good. He is a large, muscular fellow, gap-toothed and lined of face, beginning to go a little to belly, a former art student, a former merchant seaman, a writer of novels and some fine short stories who seems never to have done quite the great things that his talent suggests he can do. He can be gentle, humorous, courtly, rude to a fault, violent.

As the fireman sprayed the still smoking corner of the ruins, Dave talked about what he'd lost besides the manu-

script. His dog had started down the stairs behind him, but had turned back in the smoke and died on the floor of the apartment. His set of the Oxford English Dictionary had been destroyed along with the rest of his books. Literally everything he'd owned was gone except the bathrobe from Brooks Brothers in which he'd made his escape. (This is funny because Dave's style is sweatshirt and jeans.)

The fireman said, "Say, we did get some papers out." He went to his car and came back with a soggy mess of paper about a half inch thick. As Dave leafed through the wet paper, I could see that they bore notes for stories still to be written. Dave thanked the fireman courteously, but it was clear that he'd been disappointed in his momentary hope that part at least of his book manuscript had survived.

After the fireman had gone, we sat in garden chairs and looked down the hill and out over the beach and the broad Pacific. The air was clear and we could see the San Francisco lightship and the Farallon Islands. Beyond the horizon lay the oceanic islands, Japan, and the mainland of Asia. The day was as beautiful as any I can remember.

"It's a terrible story," Dave said. "A girl named Tooky has been living downstairs for the last couple of weeks. Yesterday afternoon she went up to Bolinas and ended up in the bar, drinking with people she didn't know. I'm not sure how she got there because she didn't have her car. At any rate, when the bar closed, Tooky needed a ride home. A fellow who's been living in Bolinas gave her a ride in his VW. When they got here, he told Tooky he'd like a cup of coffee. She invited him in. While she was making the coffee, he jumped her from behind, dragged her to the bed, and tried to rape her. She fought back. She was apparently screaming for me, but I slept right through it. If I'd been on the booze, I suppose I would have slept through the fire too. As it was, I woke up just in time, and the only thing I thought of grabbing was my bathrobe.

"When I got into the garden, I thought Tooky must be

dead. Her whole apartment was on fire and she didn't answer when I called. Then I heard a noise around the corner of the house. I found her crumpled up against the chimney. She'd been given a godawful beating. The bones of her face were broken and her eyes were swollen shut and she couldn't see. I dragged her away from the fire and somebody called an ambulance to take her to the hospital. She's a real mess."

"Are you sure the fellow with the VW started the fire?" I asked.

"The firemen say it started in a clothes closet," Dave said. "I suppose he put a match to Tooky's clothes before he left. The cops went looking for him, but he'd apparently driven back to Bolinas, picked up his gear, and cut out."

About this time Martha arrived, accompanied by Sally, the former wife of another friend of mine. Everybody hugged everybody else and Martha and Sally congratulated Dave on being alive. The girls had brought with them a couple of barbecued chickens, a loaf of French bread, and a jug of red wine. Sally had also brought some pot. We sat for a while in the sun, talking about the disaster and drinking wine or blowing grass. At last, as I began to cut up the chicken with my pocket knife, Dave turned to look at the charred walls and said, "It takes a little while for it to get through to you, doesn't it?"

It does indeed.

*Four. The Internal
Enemy*

Over slumbering California is stealing the dawn of a radiant future!
. . . California is Crown Princess of the new dispensation!

— Mark Twain

California. All that glitters is sunshine, starlight, sea spray, swimming pools, movie stars and you.

— Pan Am advertisement in the London *Times*

The politics of California is unique.

— Lord Bryce

But your mood can change, as quickly as the passing of the sun can transform the landscape itself — surely no place is so ugly as California on a cloudy day — and you are pushed toward visions of a distinctly hideous future for this state.

— Richard Todd

Nothing, sir, can exceed the deplorable state of things in all Upper California at this time.

— Commodore Thomas Ap Catesby Jones, 1849

Thousands of special police have been sworn in . . . many of whom are crazy drunk and are driving people like cattle. Clubs were used promiscuously even on women.

— AP report from San Francisco, April 19, 1906

The vehement yearning for violence, so characteristic of some of the best modern creative artists, thinkers, scholars, and craftsmen, is a natural reaction of those whom society has tried to cheat of their strength.

— Hannah Arendt

I warn you — not by way of defense but as a warning — the Black Panthers are supplying more free breakfasts to California school children than the Federal government does.

— Jess Unruh

PIGS RUN AMUCK!

— Headline in *The Black Panther*

15. *Hup-Two-Three-Four*

In mid-December 1968, finding myself in San Francisco with some time to spare, I drove out to San Francisco State College, which was then in a state of acute ferment, the acting president, S. I. Hayakawa, having found himself at odds with vocal and active segments of both the student body and the faculty. The State College campus, like the school itself, is not unattractive but is highly utilitarian and gives the impression of having grown rather than having been planned. A former teachers college, it now serves largely as a commuter school for kids on their way up — San Francisco's closest approximation to CCNY. It is, in fact, a very good school of its kind, with some first-rate people on the faculty.

I left my car near the campus in Parkmerced, a genteel housing development owned by Metropolitan Life, and walked along one side of the development's central green. I counted nineteen police cars parked along the green, each with a complement of three or four cops, who were engaged in reading the morning paper, talking to each other, smoking, or otherwise taking their ease. One of the courtyards opening onto the green had been turned into a stable for the mounted police. A couple of them were entertaining a mother and her small children who had dropped in to visit. It was a pleasant scene. (Later, a Parkmerced tenant was to be threatened with eviction for having publicly taken a stand in favor of the dissidents.)

Crossing Holloway Avenue, I entered the campus through the administration building, whose hallways were crowded with police, reporters, and television people with their equip-

ment. When I emerged onto the campus, I recognized some reporters from the newspapers, standing around in raincoats — it was a cold and bleak day — waiting for something to happen. There weren't any policemen in sight here, and, for a moment, the scene was quite normal, with kids walking between buildings and a girl distributing copies of the campus daily.

I'd just asked the girl for a copy of the *Daily Gater* when a bearded young man wearing tattered clothes appeared alongside the administration building. He was plucking a guitar and singing I thought, "Hayakawa is a fascist pig. Hayakawa is a fascist pig." (The next day I was told on good authority that what he had really been singing was "Hayakawa is a fascist prick," but the point is perhaps academic.) Just as I turned toward him, two huge policemen rushed past me and seized the troubadour. (He turned out to be a graduate student in English.)

"You're under arrest," said one of the cops.

"All right," said the troubadour.

Along with a hundred or so students, reporters, and television cameramen, I followed as the police hustled the troubadour through a door on one side of which appeared in bas-relief the word HUMANITY. On the other side was the word PROGRESS. Following them inside, we managed to get almost to the top of a stairway up which the police had taken their prisoner, but some other cops with three-foot-long billy clubs met us there and forced us down the stairs and back outside.

There seemed to be more kids outside than there had been a few minutes before. Except for a few who were chanting "On strike, on strike! Shut it down, shut it down!" they showed no signs of organization. Sixteen policemen wearing blue riot helmets and carrying long, pointed riot sticks, took up a formation near the library, next to the administration building.

There was a shout, and two policemen darted forward, ran across the campus and seized a young man on a crosswalk.

(He was, I found out later, an SDS leader they had been looking for.) They took him into the library while the students shouted and the policemen stood around and looked menacing. A heavily built policeman slipped in a patch of mud and fell. There was laughing and hooting as he picked himself up angrily, a brown stain across the seat of his trousers.

An archetype of the California campus girl — a child of eighteen or nineteen, iron-straight hair, no makeup, a short, flimsy dress, bare legs, sandals — circulated among the aroused students, calling out in a high voice, "Don't get caught! Disperse! Don't walk on the grass! Don't do anything they can bust you for!"

Another shout, and I turned and saw two hundred police in military formation, four abreast, jogging across the campus toward us. They were counting cadence: "*Hup-two-three-four. Hup-two-three-four.*" Some of the students began to chant, "*Hippity-hop. Hippity-hop.*" As the police approached, I took up a position near the library, with my back to a convenient tree.

The students made way grudgingly, and the police, still in formation, occupied a parking lot. From their shoulder patches it became evident that some of them were burly mesomorphs from the tactical squad, some were from the San Jose city police, and some from the Santa Cruz sheriff's office. Police guarded the entrances to the library and the building whose portals read HUMANITY and PROGRESS. The crowd of students grew, some of them shouting, "Pigs off campus!" The reporters exchanged notes, making sure they had the names of the arrested men spelled correctly. A couple of young medics in white coats and helmets with white crosses moved through the crowd, probably students from the nearby medical school of the University of California.

A paddy wagon pulled up to the HUMANITY building and then drove to the library. The formation of police stood guard as the SDS prisoner was transferred from the library to the wagon. Through the windshield of the paddy wagon I saw the

troubadour's guitar between the two officers on the front seat. It was, I suppose, evidence.

The paddy wagon pulled away and left the campus. The police double-timed back across the campus to their assembly point. As they went they called cadence, first the tac squad, then the San Jose cops, and then the deputies from Santa Cruz: "*Hup-two-three-four. Hup-two-three-four.*"

The students answered, "*Hippity-hop. Hippity-hop.*"

I felt as if the hand of God had grabbed me by the balls and twisted.

16. *Step on Him! Break His Legs!*

Sometimes, when I am in a particularly despondent mood about the way things are going in California, I incline toward the view that, just as the Germans of Hitler's time fell upon the Jews as the internal enemy whose torture and destruction was necessary for them to work out their paranoid fantasies, so we Californians have nominated our young people as the enemy to be destroyed.

Things, of course, are not literally this bad; yet they are bad enough. There are persistent rumors that the concentration camp at Tule Lake, near the desolate lava beds in the northeast of the state, where the most uncooperative of the alien Japanese, together with some of their American children, were incarcerated during World War II, is being refurbished to receive a new population. (And why, indeed, should these Japanese have cooperated with the people who deprived them of their property, their livelihoods, and their self-respect?)

The revived concentration camp is presumed to be in-

tended mainly for those young people who have made their presences obnoxious to the guardians of our civil order, although I suppose quarters are to be provided for those of us older people who have attached our names to protests against the Indochina war and similar national obscenities. (In testimony before the House Internal Security committee, Arthur J. Goldberg, the former Supreme Court justice, testified in March 1970 that "The very existence of this statute [the Emergency Detention Act of 1950] has given some Americans grounds to fear that, in a crisis, the machinery exists for sending them to concentration camps. To this extent the statute itself contributes to disorder and lawlessness.")

I happen to have been in the neighborhood of Tule Lake not long ago and detected no signs of any activity of this sort. I really don't believe the rumor is true. There are, however, two aspects of this matter that I think deserve attention. First, it was in California, and not in New York, Texas, or Idaho, that our wartime concentration camps began — and, ironically, they were organized under the righteous eye of Governor Earl Warren, who recommended that the solution of the "Japanese problem" be left to the army because legal methods would take too long. (I am obliged to add that the atmosphere was so poisoned in those days that even Walter Lippmann argued in favor of evacuating the Japanese-Americans.)

The point to be noted is that here in California we have an active tradition of illegal and unconstitutional incarceration on political and racial grounds. Which leads us to the second point, the uncommon persistence of this rumor. I have heard it from a variety of sources, including a bearded Chinese-American militant on the San Francisco State campus, who told me in a matter-of-fact way that, since we whites had locked up a group of innocent yellow people once before, he had no reason to think we wouldn't try it again.

The atmosphere of which this rumor is a part is the atmosphere of civil war, with the punitive apparatus of the parafas-

cist state — police, sheriff's deputies, the National Guard, rifles, bayonets, gas-guns, barbed wire, helicopters, tear gas, and mass arrests — being mobilized against the young. The war has now become nationwide, but its roots are in California, and when its definitive history is written, Friday, May 13, 1960, will hold a good claim to be the day hostilities were formally opened.

Late in April of that year, the House Un-American Activities Committee, which had left no good odor behind it after a previous visit, issued subpoenas for various suspect persons to appear at hearings in San Francisco's City Hall the second week of May. Even before the emergence of the Free Speech Movement (FSM), the Berkeley campus of the University of California was a volatile place and within a few days anti-HUAC petitions had been signed by a thousand students and three hundred faculty, with 165 faculty from San Francisco State College thrown in for good measure.

On Thursday, May 12, several hundred students gathered in City Hall plaza, some to picket (their instructions said "to protest the invasion by the HUAC of privacy of individual belief and its free expression, and to gain support from the public for the abolition of this Committee") and some to sit as spectators in the hearing room. There was some scuffling at the doors of the hearing room and students were dragged away by police. As they were being hustled out, spectators with official invitations shouted, "Get the bastards out! Send them back to Russia!" On the whole, it was an unedifying scene, but not a notably violent one.

It happened that I spent the next morning in the public library across from City Hall, leaving it about twelve-thirty. Seeing activity in front of City Hall, I crossed the plaza and found a picket line walking in an elongated circle on the broad sidewalk below the steps. Most of the pickets appeared to be students, but there were some older people, among whom I recognized the sculptor Beniamino Bufano. Bufano, who was a very small man, was carrying a very large sign and

smiling. Police were watching but not interfering, and the general atmosphere seemed to be of good humor.

Because I had to meet a one o'clock class in a school a few blocks from the civic center, I walked up Polk Street. As I went, I noticed that police reinforcements were waiting in the side streets off Polk. Among them were several cops on the three-wheelers that are usually assigned to parking duty. As I walked past, a young policeman with a fresh, ruddy face turned around to open the compartment behind his seat and took out a riot helmet, exchanging for it his uniform cap. He also equipped himself with a billy club. He said something to the other cops, who laughed, perhaps at his ferocious appearance.

Four hours later, when I left the school building, the headlines were already declaring that a great riot had occurred. And it had, for, although nobody had been killed or even shot, the disaster at City Hall was the first action in a war that was to break out in earnest across the bay at Berkeley almost five years later and spread across the campuses of the country.

As on the previous day, the abrasive issue was admittance to the hearing chambers. In the morning students had gathered in the rotunda and on the broad staircase, when Sheriff Matthew Carberry asked for their attention and told them that, although they could stay in the building if they were quiet, they were risking arrest if they demonstrated. He promised that a "representative group" of students would be admitted after the hearing reconvened at one o'clock.

The sheriff didn't come back to City Hall after lunch. The senior police officer was an inspector named McGuire, whose handling of the admittance procedure angered the students. There was shoving and shouting at the barricade outside the hearing room. The demonstrators sat down in the rotunda and on the steps and began to sing.

Fire hoses had been unrolled and connected to hydrants. One witness saw McGuire himself opening one of the hy-

drants as another policeman pointed the nozzle at a group of demonstrators sitting on the floor. According to Fred Haines, a radio reporter who was taping the action, "The rotunda seemed to erupt. The singing broke up into one gigantic, horrified scream. People fled past me as I ran forward, trying to see what was going on; a huge sheet of spray, glancing off one of the granite pillars, flashed through the air in front of me, and I retreated. It was impossible to comprehend everything that was going on. Those who stood up within ten feet or so of the hose were simply knocked down again by the force of the water, tumbling head over heels on their still seated friends. Others stood, found no place to run, their way blocked by bodies, and so sat down again. Some huddled together for protection. A second tongue of water licked out in a long arch over the barricades, and through the spray and confusion I saw that McGuire himself was manning the nozzle."

After the hoses were turned off, there were perhaps one hundred fifty demonstrators left. Motorcycle officers waded in among them, clubbing, kicking, and generally manhandling the students. The hoses were used again. Finally, the demonstrators who were still in the rotunda were ejected by the motorcycle cops, whose *modus operandi* was to drag them down the steps by their ankles or by their hair. Mr. Haines recalls the cops shouting such cries of encouragement as "Step on him! Break his legs!"

Sixty-three demonstrators were arrested. Charges were later dropped against sixty-two of them. Compared with what happened later at Berkeley and San Francisco State, the City Hall demonstration was a relatively small-scale action, but so, we might remind ourselves, were Lexington and Concord, the firing on Fort Sumter, and the night naval action in the Gulf of Tonkin, if, indeed, the latter engagement happened at all. The comparisons are perhaps out of scale, but the message is clear. A war had been declared which was to lead to pitched battles between armed men and which was to spread

from California across the country, leading toward the killings at Kent State and Jackson State.

17. *These People Want to Destroy Everything*

For eight years Max Rafferty was Superintendent of Public Instruction for the State of California, an office whose title is more impressive than its real power, which was fortunate for the children and young people of the state. When he was defeated, it was by one of his principal deputies, a tall, handsome, thoughtful black man named Wilson Riles, who accomplished an upset that the *New York Times* called "the most remarkable result of the 1970 election campaign." A super-hawk, a philosopher of the Right, an intellectual of sorts, Max Rafferty at his prime represented the finest flowering of the parafascist style. Perhaps he was merely ahead of his time.

In person, Rafferty is a well-tanned man with a firm jaw and a steady gaze. When he spoke to me in his office on the Capitol Mall in Sacramento, he did not strike me as a fanatic or a bigot but instead as a rather likable man with a nice talent for invective and a fund of remarkably reactionary ideas.

"I'm an ex-officio member of both the Regents of the University of California and the Board of Trustees of the California state colleges. I diagnose the student rebellions as stemming largely from some of the university professors, especially those who control the Academic Senate. The chancellors and presidents are becoming more and more figureheads. Instead, committees of professors control the institutions.

"In Berkeley, there was a definite desire of key professors to take over. In order to do this, it was necessary to destroy the

influence of the Board of Regents, which is set up under the California Constitution. They encouraged and egged on the student rebellion in order to make the regents look ridiculous. The University of California now projects a national image of a baggy-pants, slapstick, Mack Sennett comedian, and I say this even though I'm a graduate of the university. I blame the professors, not the students.

"Like Hamlet," Dr. Rafferty said, "my fellow regents were sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought. As a senator, I'd introduce a rider to all contracts and grants to all colleges and universities, making the contract conditional on the college or university making strong rules against violent behavior. It's crass, but money talks.

"At UCLA in my time, when the Young Communists demonstrated, they knew what they would get. As the English say, they'd get sent down. Punishment followed crime. Today, you have the joys of martyrdom without the suffering.

"The supreme irony is that the Communists have become old hat. They're the old guard, wearing high-button shoes. The Communists are absolute conformists. This is anathema to the Mario Savios. They lump the Communists with the rest of the people they're against. They aren't Communists but anarchists. Since the days of Bakunin, nobody has seriously been an anarchist, but these people want to destroy everything."

18. 139X

I have suggested that a central strategy of the para-fascist revolution in California has been to identify the young as the internal enemy that must be destroyed. In 1964 and

1965, when the Free Speech Movement and all its sequelae shook the Berkeley campus, I became aware of a disturbing phenomenon that suggested that a destructive process had indeed been set into motion, whether it was consciously directed or not. The two main San Francisco dailies, the *Chronicle* (independent) and the *Examiner* (Hearst) regularly transmitted the message that Berkeley was about to go up in flames set by such dangerous nihilists as Mario Savio and Bettina Aptheker. It was only when I managed to lay my hands now and then on that firebrand friend of revolution, the *New York Times*, that I was reminded that it was possible for a newspaper to report even such inflammatory happenings as those at Berkeley without going into hysterics.

I was confirmed in my low opinion of the reporting in the local papers when, keeping an appointment elsewhere on the campus, I found myself part of a great crowd on Sproul plaza at about noon on December 10, 1964. Two days earlier, the Academic Senate had by an overwhelming vote adopted resolutions favoring free political activity on the campus. It was a great victory for the FSM, which the rally had been called to celebrate. Perhaps I am overly vulnerable to the sense of promise generated by any group of attractive young people who are caught up in something they care about, but almost always in those days I came away from Berkeley with a sense of euphoria and with regrets for my own career at Yale, which had been fervently dedicated to getting a degree and getting out. It was never more so than on that December noon.

In spite of my general sympathy with the students, the newspapers had set my mind toward expectations of toughness and unseemly exultation in the destruction of the hated enemy. This was not the case at all. Instead, the atmosphere transmitted both by the speakers at the microphone and by the crowd itself was of moderation and something approaching gaiety. Jack Weinberg spoke and then Bettina Aptheker reminded them of the court charges that were still pending.

Mario Savio took over the microphone and waved his hand in the V sign. (In those days it was still the sign of victory rather than peace.) He said, "We've been called revolutionaries but we've gone back to the traditional view of a university." Then he sat down on the steps while other speakers took their turns. I thought he looked tired.

In the fall of 1968, four years after the Free Speech Movement had opened the floodgates of student activism over issues involving political activity, a new issue arose that was to change the entire nature of the revolt on the campus. That issue was the black rebellion — black students, black faculty, and black studies.

It was Eldridge Cleaver, free on bail, who lit the fuse on the Berkeley campus. When Cleaver was invited to lecture ten times to an experimental class called Social Analysis 139X, it caused audible distress both in Sacramento and among a number of the less enlightened citizens of the state. The regents responded by formulating a general rule that a guest lecturer would be limited to one appearance in a course given for credit. This was applied retroactively to 139X, thus suspending credit for the course. Roger Heyns, the chancellor of the Berkeley campus, authorized a student-sponsored program that permitted Cleaver to speak as scheduled, which Cleaver did without causing the foundations of the great state of California to crumble. If it had not been for the students, the matter would probably have been settled eventually after protracted negotiations.

The trouble really began after Cleaver's third lecture, on October 27, when students conducted a quiet sit-in in Sproul Hall, demanding that credit be restored for 139X. Heyns ordered them arrested, and one hundred twenty-one people, mostly students, were carted off peacefully to the Alameda County prison farm at Santa Rita. The next day, another group of students barricaded themselves in Moses Hall, where, not so peacefully, they broke into offices, smashed up office equipment, and scrawled obscenities on the walls.

Heyns called in the police again — five hundred of them from all over the Bay Area — and following the mass arrests and deportations to Santa Rita, announced that the demonstrators had been placed on interim suspension. Angrily, Heyns said of the arrests that he had asked the police to move in to avoid “violent confrontation with many injuries” and of the suspensions that “participation by any students in such reckless assaults on the freedom of others and on the university itself justifies the most severe disciplinary action.”

Governor Reagan declared his gratification, but gratification was not particularly evident at Berkeley. The editor-in-chief of the student newspaper the *Daily Californian*, Konstantin Berlandt, and Charles Palmer, the president of the student body, announced that they were going on a hunger strike to focus attention, in a nonviolent way, on the basic issues of academic freedom, free speech, and the right of students and faculty to determine courses. On the same day, some four thousand students met in Sproul Hall plaza to vote for a strike against classes until credit should be restored for the Cleaver course. The strike, however, didn't get enough support to be visible on the campus on a day in early November when I went over to Berkeley to see how Chancellor Heyns was bearing up under his burdens. (He had agreed to let me spend a working day with him, leaving him only if anybody felt his privacy was compromised by my presence.)

In the fall of 1965, when Roger Heyns came to Berkeley from the University of Michigan, where he had been academic vice-president, his mission had been to keep the University of California from destroying itself. At that time, when the university was still suffering from the raw wounds of the Free Speech Movement, Clark Kerr, who had been chancellor and who was then the president, had said, “It's one of the most difficult jobs anywhere. You need a man who could walk across the Golden Gate on water all the way.”

In the ensuing three years, Dr. Heyns had managed to keep

both himself and the university afloat, though he has yet to walk across the Golden Gate. Now, however, the university seemed to be as close to destruction as ever, or perhaps even closer. The university administrators claimed that Governor Reagan had in a regents' meeting demanded in effect that the clock be turned back forty years to the days when the Board of Regents rather than the faculty decided what courses would be taught and who would be hired to teach them and who would be fired when things went wrong. Governor Reagan answered that this wasn't what he had meant at all.

Dr. Heyns is a handsome, well-set-up man in his early fifties whose graying hair comes down in a deep widow's peak. Although his manner was generally serious, I thought I detected a boyish and even corn-fed air to him. I found him an attractive human being, but I wondered now and then in conversations with him if he had the qualities of imagination to cope successfully with the parafascist state government on one side and the militant young on the other.

In any case, his problems that day had to do with blacks. I don't think fifteen minutes went by without a racial issue of one sort or another being raised, and often in an unexpected context.

At noon, the chancellor met in his conference room for a bag lunch with the editorial board of the *Daily Cal*. Konstantin Berlandt, the fasting editor-in-chief, was sitting next to Earl F. Cheit, the executive vice-chancellor. Berlandt, a slight young man, was in his shirt-sleeves. His thinning, light-brown hair was combed across a balding forehead. He looked serious and pale, but I had the impression that this was his usual appearance and not necessarily a consequence of his fast, which was now in its ninth day.*

As I listened to Dr. Heyns talking to the kids, I was re-

* A year later, Berlandt's picture appeared in *Holiday*, with the caption: *Writer Konstantin Berlandt (above) now devotes his energies to the Gay Guerrillas, activists and street-fighters for the Gay Liberation Front.*

mindful of a phone call I'd overheard as I was sitting in his office eavesdropping. "How the hell do we get these kids to stop fasting?" he had asked whomever it was on the other end. "Yeah, I met with them Thursday for an hour and a half." He picked up the morning's edition of the *Daily Cal* and read into the telephone, "'Despite evasive responses from Chancellor Roger W. Heyns, university president Charles S. Hitch, and several regents, the editor-in-chief of the *Daily Californian* and the ASUC president are continuing their fast in the protest over Social Analysis 139X. . . .'" After some talk about sending them an official letter, he wound up with, "This is the sort of nutty thing that might get out of hand. . . . So they end up in the hospital because of Hitch and Heyns and the rest of these bastards." (The reference is to Charles Hitch, president of the university.)

Besides Berlandt, there were a half dozen other *Daily Cal* staffers around the table, four girls and a couple of other boys, and some university staff people, including Kenneth Goode, a tall, bearded, and formal-mannered black man who was an assistant to Vice-Chancellor Cheit and who looked formidably East Coast in a herringbone tweed suit with vest, button-down-collar shirt, and striped tie. Heyns, at the head of the table, ate a roast beef sandwich and an apple. Berlandt ate nothing, turning down even a cup of coffee one of the girls offered him.

After a discussion of the *Daily Cal's* finances, which appeared to be in good shape, Berlandt asked about a program of sensitivity training in racial matters that he thought it might be well for the newspaper to explore. Mr. Goode passed around a report on the program and described it as a shock treatment for whites. "You'll become frustrated and angry and even more middle-class-white," he said. "But it plants the seeds of thought."

One of the girls needed Dr. Heyns about his strategy at the next regents' meeting. A buxom girl in a sweater broke in heatedly, "There's considerable student opposition to your

statement on interim suspensions after the sit-ins in Moses Hall and Sproul Hall."

Dr. Heyns said, "The student body stayed away in droves from those demonstrations. There wasn't much enthusiasm for the strike movement. By and large, this student body doesn't believe we're going to get anywhere by closing the university down." He went on to refer to Berlandt and Palmer's fast as "non-confrontational."

"But the suspensions!" the girl cried.

A brisk argument followed about whether or not the suspensions after the sit-in arrests had prejudiced the students' cases in court. Dr. Cheit pointed out that, although he had a report on the amount of damage done in Moses Hall, he wasn't releasing it in order not to prejudice the legal case.

After the students had gone, Dr. Heyns stayed in the conference room for a weekly staff meeting with the five vice-chancellors and their assistants. There were fifteen or sixteen people in all, including two black men, Kenneth Goode and Dr. Andrew Billingsley, who is both a professor of social welfare and an assistant chancellor, and who was developing the black studies program.

The new chief of the campus police was introduced, made some good-natured ceremonial remarks, and withdrew. The discussion turned toward the practical matters of appointing faculty members of the minority races. Dr. Heyns pointed out that in the past year at least eight bona fide offers had been made to black scholars but not a single offer had been accepted. He wondered if this shouldn't be publicized as evidence of the university's good intentions. Dr. Billingsley shook his head and argued firmly that offers weren't enough. Until black teachers began accepting invitations to come to Berkeley, it was clear that the university was doing something wrong.

Dr. Heyns looked upset. His glasses went up on top of his head and he slumped lower in his chair until there was less of him showing above the table. The discussion went on for a

while without reaching a conclusion except that the university would keep trying, and try to do better.

Dr. Heyns asked how the black students had reacted to the call for a strike to protest the regents' handling of the Cleaver case. (There are probably only seven hundred to eight hundred blacks out of the twenty-eight thousand students on the campus.) Heyns said he had the impression they didn't feel too involved. Goode laughed and said, "Well, they feel involved all right, but most of them are booking it, as they put it."

There was a discussion between Dr. Billingsley and another man as to whether the Cleaver issue was a symptom of a general malaise that seemed to afflict the university, or whether the malaise had grown out of the Cleaver issue. They agreed that the Cleaver incident was probably a symptom of a more general sense of dislocation.

After the staff meeting, Dr. Heyns held office hours for students, all of whom had made appointments to express to him their concern about what was going on — and in some cases to declare proudly their involvement with the protest movements. The student I remember best was a slightly built graduate student with a great full black beard. He seemed to talk out of compulsion, the words spilling out of him as he laughed and gestured in the course of telling Dr. Heyns the story of what had happened to him on Halloween. He'd started off in high spirits, he said, with a UNICEF box and the intention of calling on all the high officials of the university. At President Hitch's house, he'd been received cordially and a donation had been made to UNICEF. The dean of his school had given him an equally pleasant reception. Then he had presented himself at University House, Dr. Heyns's official residence, to solicit a donation from the chancellor. In contrast to the cordial reception elsewhere, he had been rudely turned away by a policeman who was standing guard. "The cop wouldn't even give me a donation himself," the student said, laughing a little manically.

Dr. Heyns explained ruefully that there had been a report that some activists of the Students for a Democratic Society were up to Halloween mischief serious enough so that it seemed best to forego hospitality and call for a cop. The student accepted the explanation cheerfully and the conversation went on to the Moses Hall incident, and, of course, the issue of student participation in the management of the university. The visitor left in good spirits, laughing, talking, and gesturing to the end. After he'd gone, Heyns grinned a little wearily and told me that the visitor was one of the most gifted students in his department.

I remarked that during the course of the day, I had wondered if Dr. Heyns's job was really an impossible one.

"No," Dr. Heyns said. "It's tough, but I don't feel like a martyr. Still, it's probably tougher here than anywhere else in the country. We've got one of the most liberal campuses in the country and we're in one of the most conservative states. We're becoming more polarized, with more of a thrust to the right and more of a thrust to the left. We've got higher aspirations here, and people demand more of us."

I asked if he ever wished he'd stayed at Michigan, where, as vice-president for academic affairs, he had been considered a strong runner for the presidency.

Standing at the window, where he had been looking out at students passing along the walk outside, Heyns said, "Yes. Yes, sometimes I do. I had good relationships with both the faculty and students there. At Michigan, what I did was more constructive. Here, it's fighting fires and repairing damage. The distrust at Berkeley goes back many years and the job has been abrasive enough so that the moments of satisfaction are few.

"If you blow two weeks of your time on the Moses Hall thing, you just can't keep up a sustained effort on other things. The positive, constructive side has fallen by the wayside; it hasn't moved as fast. Most of the things that have hit

us haven't been problems we didn't anticipate but things we didn't have time to get around to doing something about.

"People ask me if I enjoy the job. *Enjoy* isn't the right word. The only thing that matters is the feeling that you're making some progress."

Later, I wondered occasionally how much progress the chancellor was really making. There was a clear indication of the way the wind was blowing in California at the July 1970 meeting of the Board of Regents. Governor Reagan, who is an *ex officio* member of the board, denied rumors that had been going around campus that Heyns would be fired in the fall. On the same day, the regents went out of their way to give pay raises to two of the Berkeley faculty. One was Edward Teller, the "father of the hydrogen bomb." The other was Hardin Jones, the right-wing professor of medical physics whom we last saw as a member of Max Rafferty's commission on righteous conduct. Perhaps it was Dr. Jones's suggestion that separate schools be established for students contaminated by drugs that had singled him out for the raise.

In the summer of 1970, Dr. Heyns suffered a mild heart attack. In November he announced that he would leave Berkeley at the end of the academic year to go back to Michigan as a professor of psychology and education. Describing the qualities needed by the chancellor, he said, "He's got to love the place. It's as if he's married to a very beautiful and neurotic woman whose relatives are impossible to live with. He needs energy, patience and a sense of humor."

As for himself, Dr. Heyns said, "I'm not mad at anyone. I'm not a martyr, and I don't feel I'm a casualty."

Perhaps not, but it certainly looked that way.

19. *Ho Ho Ho Chi Minh*

My career as a demonstrator on behalf of peace in Indochina hasn't been a particularly glorious one, but on two or three occasions I've put on my hiking boots and, accompanied by whichever of my children happened to be around, have driven into San Francisco to walk five miles or so with a lot of other people.

The last time I did this, John and I joined the parade down near the civic center and followed the line of march westward, toward the polo grounds in Golden Gate Park. The people around us were the familiar mixture of hippies, student activists, earnest young couples with their babies either in strollers or carried in backpacks, middle-aged types who might either be teachers or advertising men in their weekend clothes, and white-haired men and women whose legs no doubt owed their sturdiness to a career of demonstrating that started with the Spanish Civil War. There was also a tiny, ancient harpy, who for ten blocks screeched the words of "God Bless America," not in defiance, but to demonstrate our essential loyalty to doubters on the sidewalks.

There weren't many of these doubters. Most of the people in both the white and black areas we marched through made the V sign (which had now become the peace sign), or at least waved and smiled as we went by. There was one curious little confrontation, however. Not long after we started out, I recognized a high school boy from Tiburon. He was standing on the sidewalk, shooting photos of us marchers as we went past him. I waved to him but he didn't see me, for he was too busy with his camera, shooting, shooting, shooting. This last

winter he joined the police force, and I suppose he has somewhere in his files a folder full of photos of subversives.

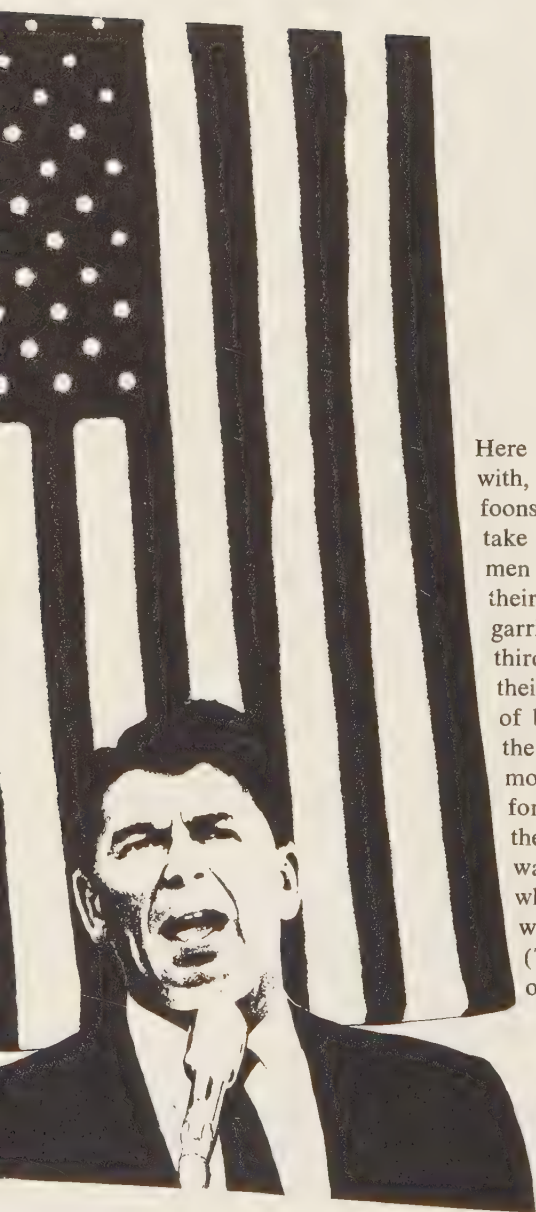
It took about an hour to get to Golden Gate Park. A tall platform had been built at the western end of the polo grounds. Some tens of thousands of people were sitting on the grass. It had been a good walk and most of them were eating lunch. John and I sat on the grass toward the edge of the crowd and unpacked our sandwiches and a can of beer apiece. It was a pleasant day, and we sat there comfortably, eating, drinking beer and watching the crowd form.

Not far from us, a group that looked like a detachment from the left wing of a Trotskyite splinter group was regrouping. There must have been fifty of them and they carried long red banners stretched between bamboo poles. We were still eating when they formed up and began to move toward the platform. As they approached us, their banners high, they were chanting "Ho Ho Ho Chi Minh, the NLF is going to win, Ho Ho Ho Chi Minh, the NLF is going to win." They came directly at us, although by changing their course by a yard or two they could have avoided us entirely.

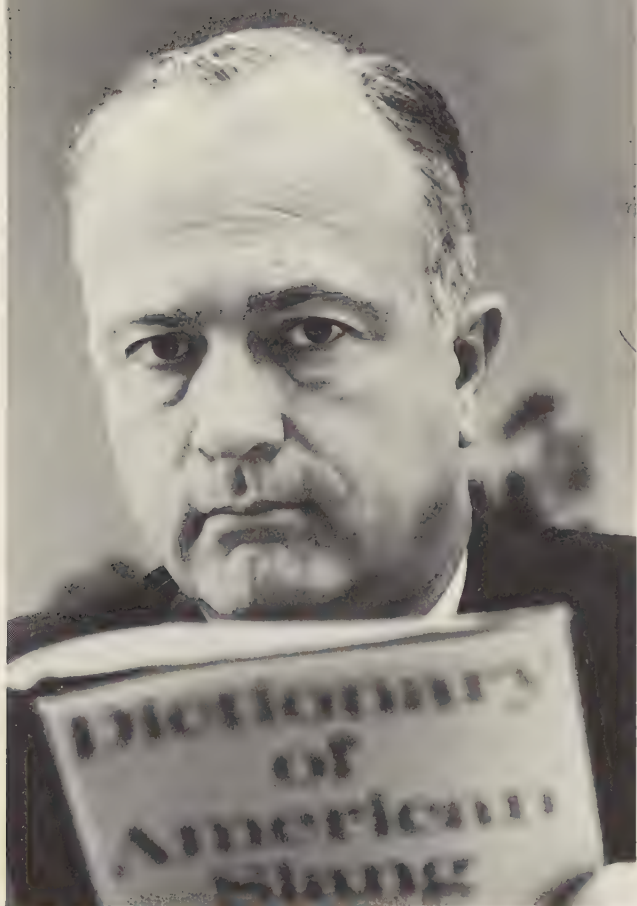
John jumped, knocking over his beer as he went. I followed, snatching our knapsack as I leaped to a safe place. What was going through my mind was *Those sons of bitches were going to march right over me!*

20. *What's So Wrong with Picking Up a Gun?*

I didn't see Mario Savio again for three and a half years after the victory rally on the Sproul Hall steps, and when I did it was under circumstances that made quite clear



Here in California we are, to begin with, governed by charismatic buffoons, men so clownish it is hard to take them seriously as politicians, but men who are not reluctant to use their tremendous powers. We are the garrison state preeminent, with a third of our people depending for their daily bread on the production of bombs, missiles, napalm, and all the other obscene items found in the modern catalog of death. In California, war is literally the health of the state. We are engaged in open warfare against an internal enemy who is often described in terms that would have instructed Goebbels. (That enemy, of course, is our own young people.)



For eight years Max Rafferty was Superintendent of Public Instruction for the State of California, an office whose title is more impressive than its real power, which was fortunate for the children and young people of the state. When he was defeated, it was by one of his principal deputies, a tall, handsome, thoughtful black man named Wilson Riles, who accomplished an upset that the *New York Times* called "the most remarkable result of the 1970 election campaign." A super-hawk, a philosopher of the Right, an intellectual of sorts, Max Rafferty at his prime represented the finest flowering of the parafascist style. Perhaps he was merely ahead of his time.

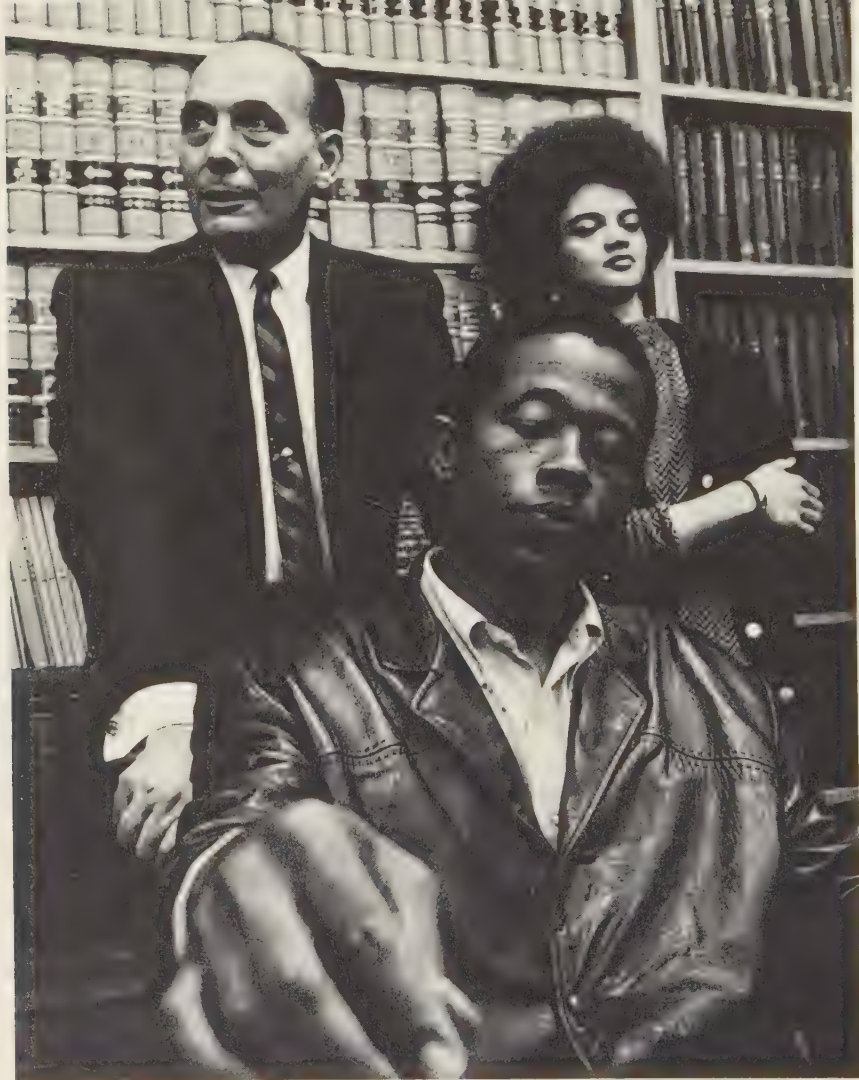


I did write a book about San Quentin, but it wasn't the great one I had in mind. What was missing, I now think, was the understanding that, instead of being an exotic place far removed from the greater world outside, San Quentin in fact then contained many elements that were prophetic of what would happen outside some years later. . . . It would be somewhat overstating the case to argue that California is now turning into a great San Quentin, but the idea has at least some poetic truth to it.



Let me, then, stay close to home for a while and pursue the theme of private disintegration through Marin County, where we can find some of the most attractive as well as some of the most dismaying aspects of California.

A couple of years ago, in the course of a conversation with a man who runs an institution for treating alcoholics, I asked where the greatest incidence of alcoholism occurs in the San Francisco area. My expert laughed and said he had just looked over a survey that showed that the hardest-drinking people around San Francisco were the American Indians in the Oakland slums and the residents of the Tiburon peninsula. I didn't laugh quite as heartily as he did.



Seale was followed by Eldridge Cleaver, who was then the Panthers' minister of information and whose book *Soul on Ice* had just been published. While Seale had been the rabble-rouser supreme, Cleaver — tall, rangy, mustached and goateed — was articulate and moderate of tone. Both here and later in a press conference called by the Black, Brown, Yellow, and Black Panther Caucus, I was struck by the powerful force of personality that Cleaver can project. In the end, despite his almost scholarly delivery, Cleaver's message was the same as Seale's: *This is the year of the showdown. If you're not with us you're against us, and we don't particularly care if you're with us or not, baby.* (Here, he is with his lawyer, Charles Garry, and his wife, Kathleen.)

. . . I found a white delegate talking to a Negro staff member.

The delegate said, "Didn't you *feel* it last night? The Black Panthers used to put me off, but when Eldridge spoke I turned on."

The black man, a spectacled, middle-class type, asked, "Didn't you feel threatened?"

The white delegate answered, "Only people who are insecure feel threatened."

I decided I must be insecure because I was scared stiff, as much by the masochistic will for self-destruction of the white delegates as by the style of the Panthers.





Sometimes, when I am in a particularly despondent mood about the way things are going in California, I incline toward the view that, just as the Germans of Hitler's time fell upon the Jews as the internal enemy whose torture and destruction was necessary for them to work out their paranoid fantasies, so we Californians have nominated our young people as the enemy to be destroyed.

Roger Heyns is a handsome, well-set-up man in his early fifties whose graying hair comes down in a deep widow's peak. Although his manner was generally serious, I thought I detected a boyish and even corn-fed air to him. I found him an attractive human being, but I wondered now and then in conversations with him if he had the qualities

of imagination to cope successfully with the parafascist state government on one side and militant young on the other.





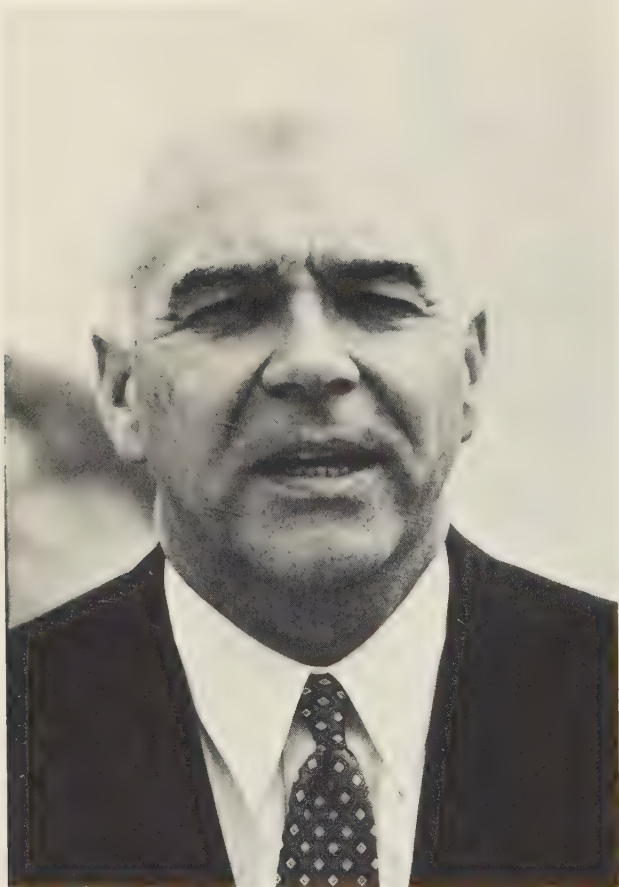
Eight minutes after the announcement, a U-19 helicopter belonging to the National Guard chopped in at an altitude of two hundred feet from the direction of the campanile, spraying the plaza with a white gas that was later identified as chlorobenzalmalonoitrile, or CS. . . .

My friend Elmo happened to be on campus when the chopper came over. He was walking around near the library when he heard the roaring of the machine and looked up to see a dense white cloud spew out of its tail. "It made three passes at us," he told me later, "and I can't remember ever being scared so thoroughly shitless in my life. I got just enough of it to keep me running, and when I heard the kids who'd gotten a full dose screaming 'My eyes! My eyes!' I just kept going."

In mid-December 1968, finding myself in San Francisco with some time to spare, I drove out to San Francisco State College, which was then in a state of acute ferment, the acting president, S. I. Hayakawa, having found himself at odds with vocal and active segments of both the student body and the faculty. . . .

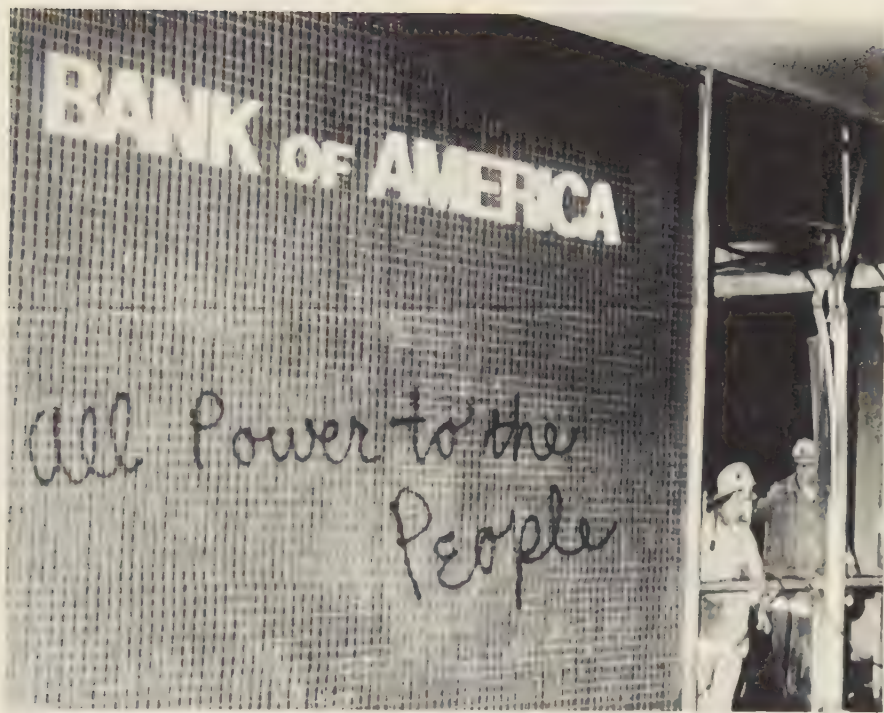
. . . a bearded young man wearing tattered clothes appeared alongside the administration building. He was plucking a guitar and singing, I thought, "Hayakawa is a fascist pig. Hayawaka is a fascist pig." (The next day I was told on good authority that what he had really been singing was "Hayakawa is a fascist prick," but the point is perhaps academic.) Just as I turned toward him, two huge policemen rushed past me and seized the troubadour. (He turned out to be a graduate student in English.) (Here, Dr. Hayakawa is at the helm in his fighting uniform.)





After characterizing California as a “rootless community with no really substantial base attachment to the soil and no stable set of values and a kind of political anarchy that results from it,” Dr. McGill went on to say, “It’s obvious that this is the prototype of modern America. It’s very obvious to me that that is what is most frightening about the prospects for us all.

“That’s why I’ve said that I think this political pressure that is developing in California should not be dismissed as being something local. I think we’re building up a national movement and my own feeling is that we’re moving rather too rapidly into a period in which some of our Bill of Rights freedoms are going to be severely cut back in order to produce a more orderly society, and when that happens I fear for a lot of noble spirits.”



Until the troubles at Isla Vista, the University of California campus at Santa Barbara had enjoyed the reputation of being a country club, undistinguished either for hard scholarship or for political earnestness. In retrospect, Santa Barbara and Isla Vista have assumed a central place in the history of the conflict between the Sacramento government and the students, and the burning of the Bank of America in Isla Vista has taken on some of the attributes of the Reichstag Fire — to the extent at least that it gave Ronald Reagan an opportunity to test how far citizens were prepared to go with him down the road that leads to bloodshed and death.

The troubles began when Miss Davis let it be known that like Bettina Aptheker she was a member of the Communist Party. Furthermore, she was a militant black, and at public meetings she displayed her command of revolutionary rhetoric. . . . If this had been all, the Davis case would still have been notable for demonstrating the contempt of the Sacramento government for the traditional processes of university administration and its determination to assume powers and prerogatives that are not usually placed in the hands of state politicians. But this was not to be the end of the Davis case, for early in August Ronald Reagan was handed one of the most astonishing gifts that any politician up for reelection could hope for.





Casual nudism was endemic, and on a Sunday ranchers in sombreros, the local gentry in golf caps, and high school boys in crew cuts stalked the hills and groves with their Polaroids. They didn't have to go far, for the whole point of going around without clothes is, of course, to celebrate the innocent glory of the flesh. For what it is worth, let me add that the nudism at Morning Star, as elsewhere, seemed generally antierotic in tendency, with none of the nuzzling, groping, and covert probing that goes on in every corner of the best-regulated beach.



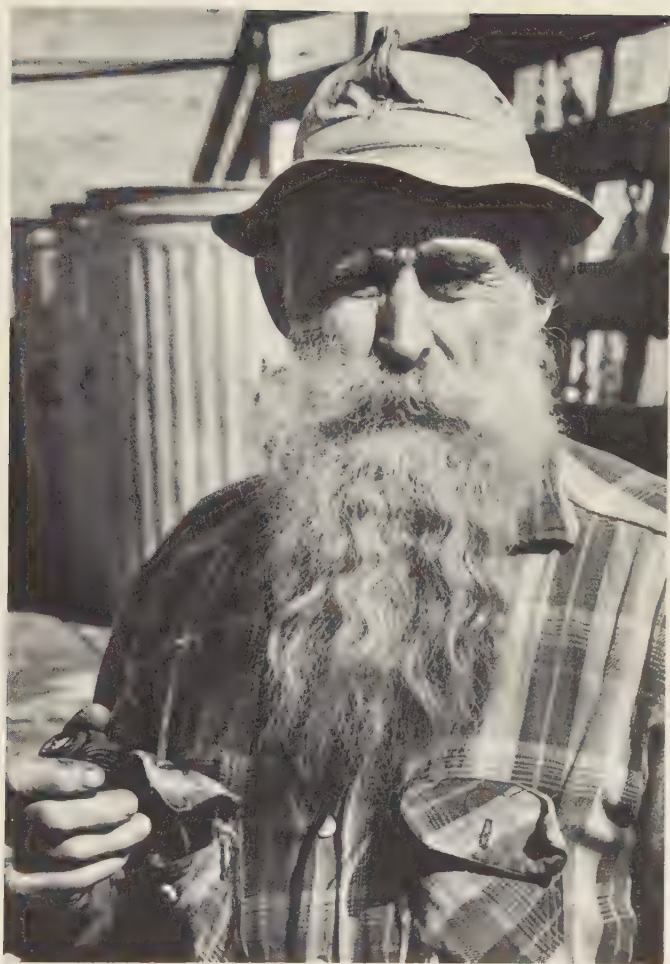
After we had reassembled around the altar, Dan tried to stimulate a general discussion, but it went haltingly. At last, looking rather impatient, he brought the discussion to an end, slipped into a homemade vestment that seemed to have been run up out of natural-colored sacking and green velvet-trim, and announced that we were going to celebrate the Eucharist. We prayed with our eyes open and our heads high and sang and ate great chunks of crusty Italian bread that circulated in a wicker basket and drank California port from a chalice. (Here, Dan is preparing the communion table.)



When I asked Bob Thomas, who is quite black of skin, about the scarcity of black priests in Los Angeles, he laughed and said, "Oh, when I was in seminary, I was going to be their glorious boy, but I decided before I was ordained that the priesthood wasn't relevant. Sure, the celibacy issue was part of it, too. I came around to feeling I had to use my manhood in the service of God." Bob became, instead, a probation officer for Los Angeles County. At the time of the party he was on leave, organizing the probation officers for collective bargaining. (As noted elsewhere, Bob's wife, Mary, had been a nun. "I didn't *leave* the convent," she told me. "I was thrown out.")



Modoc is a place of high plateaus, pine and cedar forests, sagebrush flats, broad fields of hay, and mountains. Ducks and Canada geese, whistling swans and sandhill cranes fly over it. There are mule deer and the state's largest surviving band of pronghorn antelope. To the Modockers, the rest of us Californians are "those people down below."



Splendidly bearded, Charley had been justly proud of himself. "I came out here where people told me I couldn't grow anything," he had said. "Now I have a vegetable garden, onions, potatoes, a hundred hogs and thirty head of goats."

We had talked politics. Charley had squinted at us and declared, "Down in L.A. if they'd mowed those fellows down with machine guns, there wouldn't be any more riots in the United States." Reminded of attempts to enact a gun law, Charley looked ominous and dramatic and said, "A lot of people around here are going to grease their guns and put them in boxes and bury them against the day when they'll need them."



There is still one more institution that traditionally has acted as a barrier to the growth of totalitarianism, and that is the labor movement. The labor unions have a long and honorable history in California, a history that in Northern California has created martyrs amidst violence and bloodshed in the fields and along the waterfront.

Times have changed. . . . Only Cesar Chavez and his Farm Workers Union seem to carry on the old traditions — and do against opposition from within the labor unions themselves.



The relations between the races will worsen rather than become better. The more mobile, middle-class blacks will escape to join their white brethren in the suburbs. Los Angeles, Oakland and San Francisco will become dumping grounds for semiemployable black no-hopers. When disturbances occur, they will be stamped out promptly, bringing to bear all the technology of repression that has been perfected to cope with the campus. When blacks are gassed, clubbed, killed by gunfire, and arrested collectively, there will not be as much protest as there was when white students were the victims. Yet the blacks and browns will manage to burn the cities, and great areas that once housed people will be allowed to stand as monuments to death and destruction.



Earth, water, air, and fire, said the ancients. Chemists to the contrary, earth, water, air, and fire remain our elements. If the Santa Ana is a disaster of the air, we are frequently reminded that our earth, water, and fire are even more treacherous. Like the peasants on the slope of Vesuvius, as we go about our business we are obliged in the cause of sanity to suppress the knowledge that we live on a land of such volatility that it may any day tear itself apart as it has in the past and tear us apart with it.



We will welcome this new world, for we ourselves will have made it. We will insist that we are living in the realm of Eros, but the temple we will have built will be occupied by Thanatos. The rhetoric will remain that of the Promised Land, but the reality will be closer to George Orwell's nightmare. We will give away the truth by destroying ourselves literally and symbolically at an increasing rate. . . .

And so in the end the land that Walt Whitman described as a "flashing and golden pageant" and that Mark Twain called the "Crown Princess of the new dispensation" will indeed become our first parafascist state. As California has gone, so eventually will go the rest of the United States.





how the direction of activism had changed. It was in the spring of 1968, when, like many other Californians of liberal persuasion, I had thought of switching my registration to the Peace and Freedom Party as a gesture of protest against the Indochina war and the choice of candidates that were likely to be offered us by the major party conventions. On the last day on which one could register, I had, in fact, walked up and down the main street of Bolinas, past a P&F lady who was taking registrations at a card table, before I decided to stick with the Democrats, come what may — and it did. When I attended the P&F convention in the civic auditorium in Richmond on the weekend of St. Patrick's Day, then, it was not as one of the faithful but as an observer in the press gallery.

Looking back on it now, I think that the strength of P&F was an indication of the degree to which the traditional forms of political action have been disintegrating in California. It is, for example, a curious and significant truth that, although 1.3 million more Californians register themselves as Democrat than Republican, the Democratic Party hardly exists anymore except as a convenient fiction. Instead, the political climate has nourished such fantastic growths as P&F. That so many sober citizens of mature years chose to take part in such an oddly constituted political revival movement is, I think, a fair measure of the progress of the parafascist revolution.

The Gorilla Band of the San Francisco Mime Troupe kicked off the proceedings, playing "When the Saints Go Marching In" as they paraded up the center aisle. (The Mime Troupe regularly infuriates local wowers by producing funny, subversive, and often bawdy plays in public places, such as parks.) Uniformed in wild harlequin suits like a troupe of court jesters, the band made its music on three-foot-long, brilliantly colored plastic horns as well as on more conventional instruments. When they had lined up across the stage, the leader announced that they would play the national anthem.

A martial flourish came from the percussion section. Silence. (Are we being put on?) Another flourish, this time from the brass. Silence. (Ah, we *are* being put on.) Then, to everybody's astonishment, the Gorilla Band began to play "The Star-Spangled Banner" absolutely straight. Should we stand up or not? Most of the eight hundred delegates stood up. We ladies and gentlemen of the press, moved either by professional detachment or by the conviction that we were still being put on, stayed in our seats.

As it turned out, we were right. When the band reached the line *and the rockets' red glare*, there came a clot of sour notes and then a blood-curdling scream. *The bombs bursting in air* was delivered with more sour notes and more screams from the musicians. They played the rest of it straight but at the last crescendo the band broke out a long banner: GET OUT OF VIETNAM. Two pretty, prancing majorettes in orange-and-black pajamas led the band back up the aisle, waving colored flags at the ends of long sticks.

The irreverence and audacity of the Gorilla Band struck me as a generally good omen for what I hoped would be an irreverent and audacious political meeting. Alas — during the three days of its life the convention was to awaken only twice. The first spark was set by the Gorilla Band, but was promptly smothered by an interminable discussion of procedural matters; the second spark was set by the Black Panthers, who bided their time until the evening session.

As the procedural discussions droned on, I began to pick out familiar faces, some of them people I know and some of them people I'd seen in action at Berkeley. Savio was there, pale of face and bushy of hair, wearing a dark suit with a white shirt that was open at the neck. So was Jack Weinberg, with his Greek bandit's mustache. (It was Weinberg who had spent a day and a half in a police car that was marooned in a sea of protesting students at the very beginning of the Berkeley troubles.) Others of the FSM came to the surface as the convention moved along its rather bewildering course, moved

alternately (and sometimes simultaneously) by Robert's Rules and sheer anarchy.

There were some old liberals and radicals at the convention — *old* meaning older than forty. I saw Martin Ponch, an actor and teacher, wearing a corduroy jacket and smoking an enormous pipe. The writer Paul Jacobs was there, running for nomination as senator. He is a very short man with a wrestler's face and a skull he keeps shaven as smooth as a cue-ball. Out in the corridor I ran into Minette Lehmann, the good-looking wife of a San Francisco psychiatrist, who had read manuscripts for *Contact*. Splendid in his long black hair and Old Testament beard, Lou Gottlieb looked down benevolently from the gallery. Lou is a one-time folksinger and a certified Ph.D. (in musicology) who preaches a gospel of universal peace and love. It'd last seen him at the commune in Sonoma County he calls Morning Star.

As I was looking around to see if there was anybody else I knew, a thought struck me sharply and I began to count. I counted thirty-three white faces before I saw my first black face. I counted another twenty-four whites before I encountered another black. It was an observation that I was going to be reminded of forcefully later on, when we all found our attention suddenly and dramatically focused on black faces.

But in the meantime it was clear only that the dominant style came from the campus. Wherever he actually came from the rank-and-file P&Fer was clearly a member of what somebody has called the Berkeley Floating Caucus — serious, argumentative, and rebellious. Yet, it was clear that the style of the revolution had changed since the heady days of 1964 and 1965. Two strong themes emerged from the books, activist newspapers and the wild gamut of political buttons that were displayed for sale in the corridors and lobbies. One theme was the sainthood of the late Che Guevara and the other was the importance of the slogan "Free Huey Newton."

Guevara buttons, Guevara posters, and books by or about Guevara were being sold at tables in the corridors. The P&F

security squad wore Guevara berets, some of them with Che's star. I heard a leader of the *chicano* caucus refer to "the loving and incorruptible leader, Che Guevara, whom some believe dead." Later, I asked a scholarly-looking bookseller at a stand in the lobby to explain the mass devotion to the guerrilla leader — and this in a political movement dedicated to peace. His explanation was that Guevara had not only been a figure of great personal charisma who was a natural focus for the dispossessed and rebellious, but that he had also been a man of unusual integrity, whose life and teachings had been one. (I am not myself absolutely convinced of Guevara's sainthood.)

Huey P. Newton, however, stood much closer to the real business of the convention. Also the wearer of a black beret, Newton had been co-founder and defense minister of the Black Panther Party when, in October 1967, he had been arrested after a gunfight which had left him wounded and a white Oakland policeman dead. Huey Newton became the single issue on which the convention was to make an emotional commitment. (Newton is in fact an unusually attractive and intelligent young man when he is not advocating violent revolution.)

The evening session started with deceptive good humor when Jack Weinberg, from the chair, said that he'd been told there were several plainclothesmen in the audience, in deference to whom he suggested that delegates to this "grass roots" convention refrain from using any "contraband material" they might have with them. (At times the odor of pot had in fact been getting pretty strong.)

Then Bobby Seale, the chairman of the Black Panthers, took the rostrum. He was wearing a black leather jacket and smoking a cigarette. Black, young, and fiercely angry, Seale was out on bail on a weapons charge. When he opened his mouth the meeting came to life as explosively as if he had started throwing hand grenades into the audience. Furious

and passionate, Seale declared his hate for all of us liberal white racists and for the world from which we came.

"What's so wrong with picking up a gun?" he demanded.

"Nothing, brother!" answered a voice from the gallery.

Seale told us that the police forces of Oakland, San Francisco, and Los Angeles were racist Gestapo pigs dedicated to the genocide of black people. He raised his voice, lowered it, shouted, almost whispered. He talked about the overwhelming necessity of freeing Huey Newton from the Oakland jail. Immediately. By any means.

Recalling the wrongs done to the black people, he shook his fist and shouted, "But we got hate in our hearts! *Hate!*"

While Seale was talking, I looked around the auditorium and realized that something even more distressing had been going on than Seale's invocation of Black Power, guns, and fire. He had transported the white delegates into the weird and irrational land of the true believer. They seemed to be crying, *Tell us how much you hate us, Bobby! Tell us again how you're going to burn us out!*

When Bobby Seale was through the convention gave him a standing ovation.

Seale was followed by Eldridge Cleaver, who was then the Panthers' minister of information and whose book *Soul on Ice* had just been published. While Seale had been the rabble-rouser supreme, Cleaver — tall, rangy, mustached and goat-eed — was articulate and moderate of tone. Both here and later in a press conference called by the Black, Brown, Yellow, and Black Panther Caucus, I was struck by the powerful force of personality that Cleaver can project. In the end, despite his almost scholarly delivery, Cleaver's message was the same as Seale's: *This is the year of the showdown. If you're not with us you're against us, and we don't particularly care if you're with us or not, baby.*

(A couple of weeks after the convention, Cleaver was wounded in a gunfight with police in Oakland. Charged with assault with intent to commit murder, he was sent to the

prison at Vacaville as a parole violator. It was after his lawyer managed to get him released from Vacaville that Cleaver jumped bail and began his world travels. Bobby Seale, as the whole world also knows, went on to be bound and gagged in the courtroom in Chicago, and then was tried for murder in New Haven.)

After Cleaver was through, two resolutions came to the floor. The first was to free Huey Newton. The second was to free Huey Newton by any means necessary.

Mario Savio was recognized at one of the floor microphones. He said he couldn't vote for the second resolution, which he interpreted as justifying burning down the city of Oakland to free one prisoner. The audience listened to him respectfully, and it was clear that at the age of twenty-five Savio had become an elder statesman, even if he didn't seem comfortable in the role. After Savio, another white activist, Bob Avakian, got to a mike farther back in the auditorium to give us another message: it didn't matter what price had to be paid for freeing Huey Newton, he told us. If a lynch mob was holding a prisoner, you wouldn't stop at killing every member of the mob in order to free its victim.

(Or would you?)

The convention voted unanimously that Huey Newton should be freed, but split down the middle on the resolution to use any means whatsoever. When the monitors finished counting, it was announced that the motion had just barely lost, 223 to 227. Then an amended resolution that read "Free Huey Newton by any means necessary which would further the black liberation movement" passed 3-1.*

I went home feeling tired and depressed.

When I arrived back at the convention the next day, two zany who regularly appear at peace demonstrations were holding forth in the lobby. Dressed in a mock military uniform with plastic airplanes from the five-and-dime as his ep-

* Huey Newton was finally released in August 1970, going out on \$50,000 bail pending a new trial.

aulets and cap device, the one who calls himself General Hershey Bar was making like a newsboy, holding up a newspaper whose headline shouted LSD IS A DRUG — LBJ IS A DOPE. His partner, General Waste-more-land, was holding an impromptu press conference.

The boys in the Che berets and black boots began clearing the entire building because too many people without credentials had made their way in. I retired to the press room, where I found a white delegate talking to a Negro staff member.

The delegate said, "Didn't you *feel* it last night? The Black Panthers used to put me off, but when Eldridge spoke I turned on."

The black man, a spectacled, middle-class type, asked, "Didn't you feel threatened?"

The white delegate answered, "Only people who are insecure feel threatened."

I decided I must be insecure because I was scared stiff, as much by the masochistic will for self-destruction of the white delegates as by the style of the Panthers.

Before I left the hall, I ran into Lou Gottlieb, the bearded guru of the Morning Star commune, and asked him what he thought about the resolutions about freeing Huey Newton. "Violence breeds violence," Lou said in a mild voice that went oddly with his fiercely prophetic appearance. "If I were an oppressor I'd want nothing better than to have the oppressed resist."

I was relieved that there was at least one other sane man in the auditorium, even if he was a long-haired visionary.

As I walked out of the auditorium and back into the real world, it struck me that the P&F convention was perhaps the end of politics in California. It has struck me since then that one of the processes of the parafascist revolution is that it not only discourages rational political discourse but also channels the resistance into two channels useful to its own goals — pathological violence, as in the case of the Panthers, and gal-

loping neuroses, the latter being the channel chosen by most white California liberals.

21. Bettina

Bettina Aptheker was one of the chief leaders of the revolution set in motion by the Free Speech Movement on the Berkeley campus back in 1964 and 1965. She was then identified as the daughter of Dr. Herbert Aptheker, a leading thinker of the Communist Party in the United States. Miss Aptheker unashamedly admitted to being a Communist herself.

She is a small, slender woman, now in her mid-twenties, whose rather bony, narrow face is a good deal more attractive than her photographs suggest: medium brown hair, large green eyes, a mobile mouth, a long nose. She dresses neatly and functionally. She is most evidently very bright. She is still a Communist.

I met Miss Aptheker (she is now Mrs. Jack Kurzweil * but clings to her maiden name) in downtown San Francisco, near the *People's World*, where she does editorial chores a couple of days a week. It struck me that the Palace Hotel was the most convenient place for lunch. As we walked through the lobby, she laughed suddenly and said, "You know, the last

* Jack Kurzweil is, or was, an assistant professor of engineering at the state college at San Jose. In August 1970, he was denied tenure by the chancellor of the state colleges on grounds that have a disgustingly familiar air to them. As the college's acting president, Hobert W. Burns, observed, "The assertion in the testimony that Dr. Kurzweil would have been recommended for tenure in the first instance if he had married Bettina Smith instead of Bettina Aptheker may have more than whimsy in it."

time I was here was when I was arrested during the 1964 sit-ins. Wait until I tell them at PW where I had lunch.” (These sit-ins were protesting the hotel’s allegedly racist hiring policies.)

I was disappointed when the maitre d’hotel turned us away from the magnificence of the Palace Court because we didn’t have a reservation. The idea of entertaining a card-carrying Communist in this den of plutocracy rather appealed to me, but we were obliged to settle for another dining room, less magnificent but still pretty lavish.

She was, Miss Aptheker told me after she’d ordered a glass of milk and I’d ordered a martini, writing a book about the student rebellion. “The book draws on my personal experience, but it’s theoretical too, from a Marxist viewpoint,” she said. “My interests have shifted in the direction of academic work and things like public speaking.”

I asked her how she felt about the Free Speech Movement now.

“A lot of people have suggested that the FSM lit the fuse,” she said. “My own opinion is that the fuse was lit in Greensboro, North Carolina, at the sit-in by black students in 1960. The FSM grew out of the civil rights movement, and by 1962 they had merged.

“There’s something about California that made the student rebellion start here. I don’t think the University of California can survive another decade with its present structure and its governance by the regents. Aside from its being a racist, anti-Communist university, there are much more fundamental issues, such as the bankruptcy of the academic structure and the composition of the governing board. If you trace back every single crisis that UC has been through, it comes in Marxist terms to a matter of class position. One of the points of my book is to say, ‘Listen, you guys, the university is destroying itself because of the sort of people who are running it.’ I don’t know what the regents represent, but they’re a cancer destroying the institution.”

I asked what she thought of Roger Heyns. She laughed and said, "The damn thing was that I liked him personally."

She went on, speaking of the present issues, such as 139X. "I argue that delaying the crisis makes each explosion worse. In the first instance, there's a general and probably intangible sense of crisis if not of disaster. The vast majority of the students are horribly troubled, if not frightened. One fundamental thing is that their lives don't have any purpose. If they sense this, their courses become irrelevant. This is the overriding thing — a purposelessness, a general malaise brought to a head by the Vietnam War.

"I think most white students are morally sympathetic to the demands of the black people. But, also, the majority of the white students don't understand the blacks. There's an inability to build coalitions with the blacks. Beyond that, there are different levels of consciousness between different levels of students, with the black students having one of the highest levels of consciousness. Perceptions of reality and purpose have something to do with it.

"The white students are conscious something is wrong. The black students understand what's wrong."

Toward the end of our conversation, Miss Aptheker said, "There's a whole generation of young people who have troubles coping with reality. Some of them become scholars and writers and so on and manage to cope. Others can't cope. Suicides are one result. The movement's going to go forward, but it's taking a terrible toll of young people. There's really a desperate need for people to try to give coherence and leadership."

22. *The Dogs of War*

It was significant that when the first young person was killed in a campus disturbance, it happened in California, and it was ironic that the issue that threw students and police into physical conflict was neither academic freedom nor the rights of black people, but the preservation of the so-called People's Park, a few blocks south of the Berkeley campus.

The neglect of some real issues in favor of the park remains a curious phenomenon. There is the plain truth, for instance, that the University of California is this country's number one manufacturer of nuclear weapons. As Stuart H. Loory reported in the Sunday magazine of the *Los Angeles Times*, "The only two atomic weapons ever dropped on an enemy — the bombs that obliterated Hiroshima and Nagasaki — could easily have borne the legend: 'Designed by the University of California as a public service to the people of the United States.' Every other nuclear weapon built since — the tens of thousands of warheads, bombs, torpedoes, artillery shells, land mines, and depth charges; the H-bombs and A-bombs; the 'dirty' ones and the 'clean'; the big and small, could easily carry the same legend. So could all the nuclear weapons ever tested in New Mexico, Nevada, Colorado, Alaska and the Pacific islands. In fact, the weapons used in all those tests were actually built by men receiving UC paychecks."

Yet, it was not for a cause as pertinent as this that a young man was killed, but for the People's Park. I would be inclined to guess that more words of description and interpretation

have been expended on the People's Park than on any other three-acre plot of ground in our recent history. In the spring of 1969, metropolitan newspapers were maintaining five-day-a-week coverage of the Berkeley campus, while at the slightest hint of a story, an entire regiment of reporters and a platoon of magazine writers would descend on Berkeley with their ballpoint pens and their notebooks at the ready. The story of this plot of land was told and told again as involving a series of confrontations — the students versus the Establishment, the demonstrators versus the police, the chancellor versus the governor, and so on and on. As I found out when I looked into the beginnings of the People's Park, these confrontations go back to the beginnings of California's history.

One of the earliest communications to come from the rebels, only a few days after the first meeting of the leaders at the Red Square Dress Shop, was a well-designed broadsheet entitled WHO OWNS THE PARK? In the background was the figure of an embattled Indian. Long of hair, he stood four-square, frowning at the camera, his rifle held at port arms. "Someday a petty official will appear with a piece of paper, called a land title," the text began. It went on to argue that the land on which the park was built still belonged in some sense to the Costanoan Indians, and had never rightfully belonged to the Catholic Church, which took it from the Indians, or the Mexican government, which took it from the church, or the American government, which took it from the Mexicans, or the American settlers, who bought it from their government, or the "rich white men" who passed around the title to the land until it came into the hands of some very rich men — the Regents of the University of California.

It is an appealing argument for the liberal mind, and particularly for those of us who know something about the history of California, which can be read as a pretty dismaying account of the piracy of land. Armed with a list of the twenty-three most recent owners of the property, I visited both the Alameda County recorder's office and the Bancroft Library of

the University of California to find out for myself what the genealogy of this piece of land really is.

The chain of ownership went back from the university through a succession of private owners to a subdivision map filed by the College Homestead Association in 1866, a couple of years before the College of California became the University. The map had been recorded at the request of John Whipple Dwinelle, a distinguished lawyer who introduced the act creating the university to the legislature and who served on the first board of regents. The land that was to become the People's Park was three lots in the southern half of Block 7 of this subdivision. The trail of the park land then disappeared with this map in an ancient book of deeds bound in red leather.

At the Bancroft Library, I found out that the College Homestead Association had been formed to develop and sell lands south of the campus to promote the growth of the town of Berkeley. The land then consisted of oak trees and open fields. Business was encouraged by such promotional devices as a basket picnic on the campus in August 1867, of which it was noted that "many people accepted the invitation and the sale of lots of the Homestead Association was therefore furthered." Some of the picnickers may well have acquired lots in the southern half of Block 7 at the going rate of \$1500 per lot. Thus the three acres that the university bought in 1967 and 1968 for \$1.3 million had enjoyed a rise in value of 28,889 per cent. (Oh, California!)

Between the Costanoan Indians and the College Homestead Association had come the Peralta family. In 1820, the Spanish governor, Pablo Vicente de Sola, had granted the Rancho de San Antonio, a vast tract on the eastern shore of San Francisco Bay north of the mission at San Jose, to Don Luis Maria Peralta, a Spanish soldier. His ownership having survived the Mexican revolution against Spain, Don Luis in 1842 divided his ranch among his four sons, of whom Domingo inherited the lands that were to include Berkeley. Like

many other Californios, Domingo Peralta was obliged to suffer illegal occupation by American squatters, and finally was forced to sell out.

By contrast with its ancient history, the recent history of the park seemed to hold few emotional pitfalls. In 1956 the regents had authorized a land-acquisition program that included the park area, which was then a block of deteriorating brown-shingled houses, some of which housed students. When the land was bought from its various private owners, it was first intended to be used as a soccer field and then for student housing. The buildings were demolished in the spring of 1968 but, thanks to a shortage of money, stayed vacant, serving as an unofficial parking lot until it was taken over by the students and the street people. If, after all this, we asked the young militants, "Who owns the park?" we shouldn't have been surprised when we got the answer, "The people own the park."

This, at least, was the assumption they acted on when, on Sunday, April 20, a hundred or so young people of the tribe that in Berkeley are called the "street people" moved onto the land with the sod and growing things necessary to start a park. (The "street people," who are generally not students, inhabit a couple of well-defined blocks of Telegraph Avenue, the main shopping street near the campus. They are hippie in style and opinion.) Soon there *was* a park, complete with swings and sandboxes.

The university administration at first had no objection to the park; Roger Heyns observed that there "was no reason the land couldn't be enjoyed by the community," but within a week pressure had been put on by some Berkeley residents who were bothered by the park.

Ten days after the first planting, the university reminded everybody that plans were going ahead to turn the land into a playing field. The street people, reinforced by students, continued planting. On May 8, Dr. Heyns asked to meet with a responsible committee representing the park people. There

was no response. Then, on May 13, Dr. Heyns announced, "We will have to put up a fence to re-establish the conveniently forgotten fact that this field is indeed the university's, and to exclude unauthorized persons from the site."

A battle diary of the events that followed, for it was a battle, might read like this:

Wednesday, May 14. At eight-forty-five in the morning, university workmen planted fifty-one stakes around the perimeter of the park, each stake bearing a no-trespassing sign. A few minutes later, the fifty-one signs were burning in the communal fire-pit. The university let it be known that Chancellor Heyns had given his final warning and that a cyclone fence would be put up around the park at any moment.

Thursday, May 15. Before dawn, two hundred fifty policemen ran out about seventy people who were sleeping in the park, arresting three of them for trespassing. Workmen moved in, and by eleven o'clock a cyclone fence had been put in place.

At a rally on the campus at noon, the president-elect of the student body suggested a protest march on the park. Several thousand marchers were met by five hundred police, who in the course of the afternoon fired buckshot, bird shot, rock salt, and tear gas. At least one hundred twenty-eight persons were hurt. Three were reported in critical condition. Sixty police were given first aid, including one officer who had been stabbed.

One of the critically injured people was James Rector, a twenty-five-year-old visitor from San Jose, who had done some work in the park. While the demonstration was going on in the streets, Rector, along with two or three dozen other people, watched from the roofs of three buildings. The police version was that Rector was shot as he prepared to throw a chunk of concrete onto police and deputies in the street below. Witnesses on the roofs, however, say that Rector never had anything to throw. Nor did anybody else near him. Somebody on the farthest roof from Rector was seen to drop a half

brick to the pavement. Several policemen on the sidewalk wheeled around, raised their shotguns, which were loaded with double-ought buckshot (about the size of .38 slugs) and fired. A research assistant at the university gave the following eyewitness account: "Rector had been on the roof trying to get out of the way. I saw him at the moment he was hit. I saw his back arch as the shot hit, just like Vietnam. He fell really hard. He would have fallen off the roof if two other guys hadn't grabbed him."

Ronald Reagon mobilized the National Guard and imposed a curfew on Berkeley.

Friday, May 16. Shortly after dawn, about two thousand National Guardsmen of the 49th Infantry Brigade moved into Berkeley and established a bivouac in the park.

At Herrick Memorial Hospital, Rector's condition was described as "abdominal gunshot wound resulting in perforated stomach, removal of spleen, partial removal of pancreas, removal of left kidney, portions of large and small bowel removed; bullet in liver; three wounds in left flank."

Saturday, May 17. Generally quiet.

Sunday, May 18. Two thousand people met for a silent vigil in front of Herrick Hospital, where Rector and eight others were being treated. One of these, Alan Blanchard, was a carpenter and painter who was to lose his sight from buckshot wounds in his face. With the exception of a middle-aged woman whose nose had been broken in a beating, the others had been wounded by gunshot.

Sheriff's deputies and guardsmen moved the crowd along. Carrying picks and shovels and small plants, the marchers paused to plant greenery along the way. The police followed, pulling up the plants and depositing them in their paddy wagons. The march wandered six miles through Berkeley and was finally broken up when it turned toward the People's Park. Three marchers were arrested. There was no violence.

Monday, May 19. There was little outright violence as several hundred soldiers with fixed bayonets confronted a crowd

of four thousand demonstrators, who began by meeting on the campus at noon in defiance of Governor Reagan's emergency edict prohibiting public assemblies. When the crowd marched off the campus and into downtown Berkeley, they were met by more soldiers with bayonets. Three deputy sheriffs clubbed a young man painting a V sign on the wall of the Berkeley Little Theater and dragged him off to the police station in spite of the offer of a young female medic to bandage his injuries. About a hundred students in the basement of the student union were driven out by tear gas grenades, again thanks to the deputies. The tear gas drifted up the hill to the faculty club, causing the abrupt cancellation of a talk that Chancellor Heyns was about to give to the Berkeley chapter of the American Association of University Professors. An hour later another gas attack in Sproul Plaza scattered the remaining demonstrators.

James Rector died at ten in the evening.

Tuesday, May 20. A pathologist found three buckshot pellets in James Rector's chest. One of them had struck his heart. The autopsy report said that Rector had died from "shock and hemorrhage due to multiple gunshot wounds which perforated the aorta."

About three thousand people, many of them wearing black armbands or carrying black balloons, assembled on the campus for a silent vigil. Eventually, they decided to march into the business district. Following an associate professor of psychology, they marched to the edge of the campus, where they were stopped by a line of police and soldiers. A police lieutenant told them the meeting was illegal and ordered them to disband.

The crowd broke up, some of them heading toward Chancellor Heyns's official residence on the campus, from which they were driven back by tear gas. The demonstration seemed to be over.

At about the same time, however, soldiers wearing gas masks stationed themselves around the Sproul Hall plaza, re-

enforcing the perimeter they had created with rolls of barbed wire. At the student union, inside the ring of soldiers and wire, students were eating their lunches at outdoor tables. Some had nothing to do with the demonstration. Others were activists.

Newspapermen on the scene were advised by friendly policemen to keep their gas masks handy, for something was going to be dropped on the plaza. Overhead, the commander of the California National Guard, Major General Glenn C. Ames, looked over the scene from a helicopter. He saw, he reported later, that the crowd in the plaza "showed inclination to stand and hold and not disperse." Some, he said, "were moving toward our lines." He had also heard that militants on balconies of buildings were throwing chairs at his troopers. (Curiously, none of the reporters at the scene saw chairs being thrown.)

Brigadier General Bernard Nurre, the field commander, and Alameda County Sheriff Frank Madigan had already agreed that a gas attack from a helicopter was the appropriate way to break up the crowd. For reasons of their own, they neglected to inform William Beall, the chief of the campus police, of their intended tactics until about ten minutes before the attack.

At about two o'clock, a campus policeman appeared on the balcony of the student union building and announced over a bullhorn that chemical agents were about to be used. He asked the students to leave the plaza. This involved some difficulties. First, there was only one exit from the plaza. (The troop commander said there were three, but newspapermen on the scene could only find one, in the southwest corner.) Second, many of the students couldn't hear the announcement, thanks to the noise being made by the militants in the plaza.

Eight minutes after the announcement, a U-19 helicopter belonging to the National Guard chopped in at an altitude of two hundred feet from the direction of the campanile, spray-

ing the plaza with a white gas that was later identified as chlorobenzalmalonitrile, or CS, a stronger agent than the CN that had been used before. Characteristically, the military claimed that they had used CN, until it became apparent that they hadn't. CS has been used in Vietnam to drive the Vietcong from their hiding places. It produces constrictions of the chest, burning of the mucous membranes, vomiting, diarrhea, and leaves blisters on the skin. An agent that produced white smoke had been added for psychological effect.

Demonstrators and innocents alike vomited, screamed, fought for breath, fell to the ground, ran, and eventually found their way through the gap in the ring of soldiers and barbed wire. The breeze carried the gas as far eastward as the campus hospital, where a patient who had trouble breathing had to be put into an iron lung. Small children playing outside their homes even farther from the plaza were affected.

My friend Elmo happened to be on campus when the chopper came over. He was walking around near the library when he heard the roaring of the machine and looked up to see a dense white cloud spew out of its tail. "It made three passes at us," he told me later, "and I can't remember ever being scared so thoroughly shitless in my life. I got just enough of it to keep me running, and when I heard the kids who'd gotten a full dose screaming, 'My eyes! My eyes!,' I just kept on going."

Arrest squads of police rounded up groups of people on the streets around the campus, charging them with violating the governor's prohibition of public assemblies.

In Sacramento, Ronald Reagan admitted that the helicopter attack may have been a tactical mistake, but went on to observe that "once the dogs of war are unleashed, you must expect things will happen, and people being human will make mistakes on both sides."

Sometime during the happenings of the day, a twenty-six-year-old National Guard corporal named Michael L. Felici-

ano took off and threw down his helmet, dropped his rifle, and was taking off his flak jacket when the MP's got to him. General Nurre announced later that Feliciano's trouble had been diagnosed as "suppressed aggressions."

Wednesday, May 21. Five thousand students and two hundred faculty members met at an illegal rally at noon around the campanile. When some of them tried to leave the campus they were stopped by soldiers with fixed bayonets. Fifteen hundred people gathered outside Chancellor Heyns's official residence but were turned back by companies of soldiers.

Speaking for a hundred other faculty members, Owen Chamberlain, a Nobel Prize physicist, declared their unwillingness to teach until peace should be restored and the troops and police removed. The *Daily Californian* declared editorially that "the police are not controlling riots, they are rioting. They are not preserving order, they are creating chaos."

Twenty-one persons were arrested, making a total of 256 since the day of Rector's shooting.

Thursday, May 22. Police and troops stopped a column of fifteen hundred marchers half a block from the campus and arrested 496 persons. (The total for the day was 540.) The prisoners were held in a bank parking lot while busses were ordered to carry them to the county prison farm Santa Rita, which for five years had been serving as the principal bastille for Berkeley. A sprawling institution of low wooden buildings surrounded by barbed wire, Santa Rita stands off the highway that goes to the vineyards of the Livermore Valley.

One of those arrested was a newspaper reporter named Tim Findley, whose account of his experiences appeared the next day. When Findley arrived in a bus with fifty other arrested men, he found the two hundred prisoners who had already arrived lying face down in an asphalt compound. One young man, who had apparently called a guard a punk, was being beaten. The voices of the guards tell an eloquent story as they address the prisoners lying prone in the incoming fog:

The first ——— that slows down is going to get a stick up his ———.†*

Get down on your face — turn your head to the left and line up on the man to your left's head — your left, stupid. Now get your hands down at your sides. Don't move, don't talk.

Any of you creeps got a camera, put it out in front of your head! We find a camera later and we smash it and your head at the same time!

Don't none of you move. We shoot to kill here.

You think this is cold, creeps? It gets really cold in a couple of hours. We'll leave you out here to freeze to death, maybe that will teach you to stay out of Berkeley.

The marine brig atmosphere continued throughout the night as the prisoners were searched, booked, fingerprinted, and assigned to barracks. ("Hell, we're gonna keep track of you troublemakers. We're gonna enforce the McCarran Act soon and put all you troublemakers in concentration camps," the civilian taker of fingerprints told one prisoner.) Lawyers retained by the People's Park Defense Committee worked through the night to get bail. The arrested demonstrators began to leave the next morning, most of them on bail of eight hundred dollars for unlawful assembly but others on bail going up to three thousand dollars.

Friday, May 23. The Academic Senate met to vote on several resolutions. It voted 642-95 in favor of a resolution that the cyclone fence around the park be removed. By the same vote it urged the withdrawal of troops and police from the campus and asked for investigations by the Department of Justice and the California Attorney General into "the police and military lawlessness committed in the past eight days in the name of maintaining law and order."

At the same time the senate voted overwhelmingly not to

* I suggest "motherfucker."

† I suggest "ass."

bring to a vote a resolution calling for the resignation of Roger Heyns.

In the afternoon, a press-service photographer was clubbed and cameras belonging to two other photographers were damaged as they took pictures of a woman being arrested for disturbing the peace.

Saturday, May 24. Ronald Reagan ordered most of the troops withdrawn to nearby armories and lifted the restrictions on "loitering" after the ten P.M. curfew and against public meetings and marches. The state of emergency remained in effect, however, and one hundred fifty soldiers remained on duty at the People's Park.

Sunday, May 25. C. Kilmer Myers, the Episcopal Bishop of California — a conservative, particularly by contrast with his predecessor, the late James Pike — called Ronald Reagan a "war monger" at a chapel service in Berkeley. He went on to describe the governor as "the one who has unleashed the dogs of war in Berkeley . . . a full-scale military operation replete with strong-armed and brutal methods which I as a student observed in Germany in 1939."

At the University Medical Center in San Francisco, ophthalmologists delivered a guarded prognosis on the sight of Alan Blanchard, the twenty-nine-year-old carpenter and painter who had been wounded in the same shotgun blasts that killed James Rector. Blanchard was reported to have lost one eye and most of the sight of the other.

Monday, May 26. Generally quiet.

Tuesday, May 27. A former sergeant of the California Highway Patrol, now a biologist at the Berkeley campus, wrote to a newspaper to declare his shame at the patrol's involvement in "beatings, savage police attacks, and illegal arrests." His letter ended with a quotation:

"The streets of our country are in turmoil. The universities are filled with students rebelling and rioting. Communists are seeking to destroy our country. Russia is threatening us with her might, and the Republic is in danger. Yes, danger

from within and from without. We need law and order. Yes, without law and order, our Nation cannot survive. Elect us and we shall restore law and order.' Adolf Hitler, Hamburg, 1932." *

In Sacramento, Ronald Reagan was asked by reporters what action he intended to take in the face of plans for a mass march on Memorial Day that was expected to draw as many as fifty thousand people to Berkeley. The governor answered that he would use whatever force was necessary, particularly if the marchers attacked the fence.

One of the newspaperman asked Mr. Reagan what comments he might care to make on Bishop Myers's remarks. He answered, "Well, perhaps Bishop Myers had better review his own words and deeds to find out if he's not indeed breaking one of the commandments against taking the name of the Lord in vain. I would think that it could be stretched that far to cover someone using the pulpit and his cloth to speak of things he knew not wherefore of."

Mr. Reagan added quickly, "If you use that quote, say I said it laughingly."

Wednesday, May 28. Quiet.

Thursday, May 29. As plans for the Memorial Day parade went ahead, Sheriff Madigan said that shotguns would be used if necessary. "It is difficult to say at this time if this will be a buckshot or a birdshot riot," he added.

The sheriff went on to say that he would discipline any deputies found guilty of brutality at Santa Rita, but explained that many of them were veterans of the Vietnam War who "take a very dim view of this situation . . . they have a feeling these prisoners should be treated like Viet Cong." †

* The authenticity of this quotation has been disputed most recently and most vigorously by M. Stanton Evans, writing in the *National Review Bulletin*. Mr. Evans quite properly takes issue with liberals who have replied that even if Hitler didn't say it, he should have.

† In February 1970, a Federal grand jury indicted twelve of Sheriff Madigan's deputies — ten of them for conspiring to mistreat prisoners

Friday, May 30. When I decided to see the march for myself, it was not out of any great passion for the cause involved. The People's Park had not particularly turned me on as a great social issue. Yet I did want to see what was going to happen, even though I was afraid (along, I guess, with everybody else) that the day might end up with buckshot flying and gas descending as it had before.

As it turned out, there was to be no violence at all, and the prevailing mood of the marchers seemed to be as clear and sunny as the day itself. (The euphoria that has frequently seemed to me to be the dominant mood of these tribal affairs deserves to be investigated as a primary characteristic of the youth movement. Is it any wonder that young people engage in behavior that makes them happy when the world of us adults is so emotionally gray? Another aspect that interests me is the extent to which gaiety is a function of danger. Would the Memorial Day march have been so euphoric if there had not been the threat of buckshot and gas?)

At any rate, I went as an uncommitted observer, standing on the sidewalk with my spiral-bound notebook and my ballpoint pen, watching the Berkeley Floating Caucus and their allies march by. After a while I accepted a daisy from a young lady who was most evidently not wearing a brassiere under her tissue-thin blouse, and I joined the parade.

We first met soldiers at the corner of Hearst and Oxford streets. Two large trucks shut us off from moving to the left. There were troops both aboard the trucks and afoot. One of the men on the street was carrying a big-barreled gun that I guessed was to project gas grenades. Another carried what I

at Santa Rita and two for violating Federal law by depriving James Rector and Alan Blanchard and others of their constitutional rights by "imposing summary punishment upon them."

When the first deputy came to trial, the prosecution argued that "without once apprehending anyone, without telling anyone they were doing anything wrong, and without warning that he would shoot, he fired a shot not caring whom he hit or what became of them." The deputy was, however, acquitted.

recognized as a Browning automatic rifle. They meant business, jabbing the muzzles of their weapons at a couple of young men trying to get through their line. (Would the young soldier with the BAR have used it under provocation, I wonder?)

The street was completely full of people, many of them carrying signs. One large banner, adorned with the yin-yang symbol, said COMMITTEE OF CONCERNED ASIAN SCHOLARS. Among the banners were American flags with flowers tied onto the ends of their staffs. A middle-aged woman sat on the sidewalk in a wheelchair, holding a bunch of daisies and smiling. At the age of forty-six, I felt old in this crowd, but there were many older than me, some of them literally little old ladies in tennis shoes.

When we turned into the business district to the south of the campus, deputy sheriffs in blue coveralls looked down on us from the rooftops. They were holding riot guns. (Remember what the sheriff had said: "It is difficult to say at this time if this will be a buckshot or a bird shot riot.") These were the officers the kids call the Blue Meanies, after the villains in the Beatles' movie *Yellow Submarine*.

On a streetcorner two women with a big jug of iced tea were pouring it into plastic cups. I stopped and accepted a cup. It was too sweet for my taste, but it was cold and refreshing.

We marched up Dwight Way to the park. Accordion rolls of barbed wire cut off access to the side streets. Ten feet behind the famous fence stood a line of soldiers, smoking and talking at their ease. They had fixed bayonets on their rifles, however. The fence had been decorated with flowers. On one no-parking sign somebody had written DO NOT FEED THE ANIMALS. Yet the atmosphere was relaxed, and soldiers and marchers smiled at each other through the fence.

I stepped out of the sun onto the portico of the Christian Science church. Across the street, a plump clergyman stood coatless on the steps of the Baptist seminary, holding a daisy

in his hand. One side of the portico was cut off by barbed wire and four soldiers.

A truck loaded with rolls of fresh sod passed by. Another truck loaded with youngsters stopped alongside the park. A girl took off her blouse and danced on the bed of the truck, her heavy breasts bouncing joyfully. Everybody shouted and cheered, and the soldiers behind the cyclone fence grinned even more widely but hung onto their bayoneted rifles.

A young man fainted in the street, falling suddenly, limply. Two student medics wearing white coats and helmets with red crosses picked him up and carried him to an aid station nearby. The boy came to and looked around, surprised.

I followed the truck up the hill. Two blocks above the park, boys had laid sod in the middle of the street, creating an ad hoc park. A couple of young men started to throw a Frisbee back and forth. Others played with a softball. A slender black man turned on a garden hose, letting the water arch up and sprinkle the bystanders. A buxom girl stood deliberately in the spray, raising her arms and dancing. Her striped T-shirt, drenched, clung to her breasts. Everybody clapped and laughed.

I walked around the eastern perimeter of the campus, past the stadium and the campus hospital, which the tear gas had reached ten days before. People were sunning on the grass, their shoes off, cooling their feet. I accepted a glass of lukewarm water from two girl medics. Hanging from the upper windows of a sorority house was a banner: POWER TO THE PEOPLE'S PARK. An out-of-gas truck limped by, being pushed by twenty or thirty people, some of whom were warning the driver loudly that considering the state of his brakes he'd better not try rolling down the Hearst Avenue hill. No police or soldiers were in sight.

I walked across the campus back to Dwight Way. In a vacant lot, a crew of young men were building another park. It was very small and evidently symbolic. They worked hard, bare-chested and sweating. While most of them dug, two

young men in yellow monk's robes stood on the bed of a sound truck, chanting into a microphone: *Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare* . . .

And so the march that had started with premonitions of violence and disaster ended in exhilaration and joy. It was a phenomenon, and one that convinced me that all of us, in California and elsewhere, young people and we older citizens alike, are starving for a sense of participation, for the conviction that we are taking part in the defense of a worthy cause—even when that cause is as confused and murky as the People's Park.

I went back several weeks later on a cool, gray day. The fog was hanging low over the hills above the campus. In place of the battalions of soldiers who had bivouacked in the park, there were four guards in the blue-gray uniforms of the Burns organization. Two of them were young and black; two were middle-aged and white. One of the black men was sitting on a bench by himself, near the tall redwood tree that still rose from the center of the block. He was idly tracing designs with a stick on the freshly turned earth. The two white guards were talking, one sitting and one standing, outside a tool shed or guard shack a few yards away. One of them was smoking a curved pipe. At the gate, the other black guard, a very young man who was wearing a tan trench coat, had a walkie-talkie to his ear. It seemed to be going *blatt-blatt-squeak-blatt*. He gave me a pleasant "Good morning."

A couple of men with the intent look of surveyors about them were measuring the ground and then driving stakes. A bulldozer operator fired up his machine and set it into motion. There really wasn't anything left to bulldoze; he was merely adding the final touches to grading the land to make it ready for an intramural playing field. Hardly anybody passed by on the streets outside the park. The only reminders of violence were gashes in the steel mesh fence made by a maverick group of hard-core protestors a week or so before.

23. *Commie Jew Beatnik*

Like Mario Savio, but unlike most of the other leaders of the FSM, Art Goldberg was back in Berkeley five years after the first of the great student rebellions. While I waited for him in Eshleman Hall, just west of Sather Gate and Sproul Hall on the Berkeley campus, I read the course announcements on the tackboard of the Center for Participatory Education. They went like this: Film as Literature; Law, Ideology, and Social Change; Pilot Project on Homosexuality; Politics, Protest and Crime; Turning on Social Systems; Cultural Terrorism; Nonviolence and Revolutionary Change.

Goldberg, whom I hadn't seen since the victory rally at Sproul Plaza, arrived, a tall, heavy-set man in his late twenties with electric dark brown hair and a round, cheerful face. He has a squint in one eye. He was wearing a brightly patterned collarless shirt that looked African, well-worn jeans, white socks, and black shoes.

"Articulate" is a pale word to describe Goldberg. Sentences pour out of him like water from a bottomless pitcher. When I asked him about the changes at Berkeley since 1964, he grinned and said, "Today everything in Eshleman Hall is controlled by the liberal Left except the athletic department on the fourth floor, and we even got some football players involved in the past few years. . . . The chancellor is trying to take more power away from the Associated Students. . . . That colonial regime in Sproul Hall. . . . An amazing takeover in a way compared with five years ago. . . . The student body is united that the war's bad and that education

is a shuck. . . . Maybe fifty per cent of the kids believe that. . . . In a way it's harder to build a movement now because of the cynicism. . . . The kids have really found out what their own interests are. . . . Most Americans at this time don't share their vision. . . . The People's Park issue shows that cynicism goes when the right issue comes along."

When he stopped for breath, I mentioned that I'd been struck by the gaiety of the crowd at the victory rally five years ago and at the Memorial Day march just past. Goldberg nodded and launched forth again: "The reports in the media don't show the euphoria. . . . It's the kids who've been beat up by the cops who feel this. . . . This euphoria comes over. . . . The working class hasn't been talked to by the Left for over twenty years. . . . We're now beginning to re-orient ourselves. . . . One thing we lack on the Left is any form of political organization. . . . Rents are going up all around the university. . . . We're going to have a rent strike, organizing block by block. . . . There's also a euphoria in street fighting. . . . The satisfaction of coming back after pain has been inflicted on you. . . . This is a lot better than Art Linkletter's daughter jumping out the window. . . . Cal is really still a ruling-class university. . . . The average parents' income is sixteen thousand dollars. . . . A lot of kids would like to be political. . . . Their parents are really messed up. . . ."

I asked him what he was doing with himself. "I've been working on my book every day for seventeen months. . . . It's called *Autobiography of a Commie-Jew-Beatnik* and it's going to be published by Holt, Rinehart & Winston. . . . I taught a course last semester at the Center for Participatory Education. . . . We have more beautiful people in California than in any other state. . . . Even the Hare Krishna kids. . . . Communism is really spiritual. . . . Some of the Chinese principles are really beautiful. . . . If you're really a Communist it means you probably hate Russia. . . . You have to have a love for working together and sharing. . . .

I'm trying to develop another culture, another life-style. . . ."

I asked about the progress of his legal career. (Goldberg earned a law degree at Rutgers but was denied admittance to the California bar because of the seven months he has spent in jail on one occasion or another.) He answered, "I'd like to be like Charles Garry [the lawyer for the Black Panthers]. . . . People say 'Maybe you'll get more conservative.' . . . No. . . . What you do is what you have to do when you're involved in it. . . . I hope I'll be doing the same thing if I'm around when I'm fifty even if I do it more slowly than I do it now. . . . I've been involved politically since I was nineteen or twenty.

I asked him how the FSM looked five years later. Goldberg said, "The FSM brought together five or ten people with very good skills and brought them together in the oppressive Berkeley of 1964. . . . Mario hasn't totally dropped out. . . . His head is still in politics. . . . But I'm the only one close to the umbilical cord. . . . The thing that unites the kids is the feeling that the society they live in is an oppressive one, full of racism and war. . . . The movement is beginning to develop an anticapitalist, antiimperialist ideology. . . . I like China, but you have to realize the movement has to be geared to what's going on in this country. . . . I'm a nationalist. . . . I go around openly saying I'm a Communist and then having to explain for an hour that I don't like Russia. . . . The FSM was purely a civil liberties issue. . . . The People's Park was off campus, a community issue. . . . There was a feeling we wanted to create something."

I wondered aloud what the future was at Berkeley.

Goldberg responded, "We have to start relating to the outside working class. . . . We are with their struggle to end racism. . . . We'll do everything we can to help them. . . . We want this university to be for the sons and daughters of the working class. . . . We'll never get the structure we

want so long as the regents represent the ruling class and pay the salaries.”

I thanked Goldberg.

24. *What's Going to Sink Me Here Is . . .*

In the years after the eruption of the Free Speech Movement, Berkeley achieved a firm position in our national folklore as a center of all the things that we good citizens deplore — wild-haired young men, free-living girls who have abandoned both their brassieres and parental prejudices in favor of chastity, outright Communists like Miss Aptheker and Mr. Goldberg, radical ideas of the proper forms of society, and an inclination to take direct and sometimes violent action to remedy existing wrongs. Nowhere is this half-mythological Berkeley feared as much as it is in the quiet cities and comfortable suburbs elsewhere in California.

To the respectable alcoholics and adulterers of the suburbs, Berkeley appears as a direct threat, a source of infection where evilly motivated young people and malign professors brew virulent spiritual toxins. Unless care is taken, this paranoid and parafascist dream goes, spies and saboteurs from Berkeley will invade *our* community under cover of night to poison our water supply and inoculate our innocent boys and girls with dangerous doctrines.

This is not quite true. The style of student rebellion — whether at Berkeley, UCLA or Santa Barbara — has been influenced not only by the dynamics of the student movement, but also by the character of the individual campus and its local community. Perhaps nowhere do the styles of town

and gown offer quite such an instructive contrast as they do at the University of California at San Diego, which is actually located on the Torrey Pines mesa, north of La Jolla (La HOY-a), fifteen minutes on a fast freeway from downtown San Diego. The development of the La Jolla campus is in fact a textbook case of the natural history of a California university.

San Diego and La Jolla are both communities in which a substantial number of citizens believe in the conspiracy theory of student protest. It is, in the familiar phrase, outside agitators who have stirred up our clear-eyed, clean-thinking young people, just as it is outside agitators who have in the past conspired to fluoridate our water or encourage black families to move into white blocks. Although with about eight hundred thousand inhabitants San Diego has moved past San Francisco to become the state's second city, it only now finds itself poised somewhere in the treacherous crossing point between being a sunny and comfortable place to live, particularly for retired navy and marine officers, and becoming a real city. Having prided itself in the past on being the Bluejacket Town and the Red Geranium Town, in the last decade it has had to cope with such substantial big-city problems as a severe economic dislocation, the decay of its downtown, increasing pressures from its racial minorities, and its own well-polished image as a citadel of California conservatism second only to Orange County. For myself, I would regard an invitation to live in San Diego with approximately the same enthusiasm I would regard an invitation to be pressed to death under weights.

Suburban La Jolla is San Diego triple-distilled. For many years La Jolla served chiefly as a gold-plated retirement home for senior officers in the armed forces, mainly the navy. In the bar of La Valencia Hotel, smartly dressed women drink splendid martinis as they talk about hairdressers and clothes and stocks; gray-haired, ruddy-faced men in tweed jackets and flannels talk golf and horseracing and stocks. (The ten

stockbrokers' offices in town open their doors at six-thirty in the morning to keep abreast of the New York exchange.)

La Jolla is not a swinging town. Walking back from the movie house at ten one evening, I counted one other soul on the streets, and even the police station seemed to have closed down for the night. Nor is it an enlightened town. "Until a few years ago, Democrats didn't speak up in public and Jews couldn't buy land," I was told by a resident scientist. He added, however, that things have changed a good deal since then. I verified this by scanning a random page of the town directory. There I found listed — along with an admiral, a marine corps colonel, and a navy captain (all ret.) — the president of a research corporation, a physicist, a research biologist at the university, a scientist at the Salk Institute, five engineers, and fourteen students.

To make the dislocation between the campus and its surrounding communities even more acute, the university was conceived of not as merely a vocational school for the sons and daughters of Southern Californians but as the equal of Berkeley, of Heidelberg, the Sorbonne, and the American and English Cambridges. I had this lesson pounded home to me several years ago at lunch with Robert Tschirgi, an old acquaintance who was then the institution's vice-chancellor for planning. "The whole point of this place is that it's consciously Olympian," Tschirgi said. "These aren't just the best people in California, they're the best people *anywhere*, people who deserve to live on Olympus. What the campus thinks of itself will determine what it becomes. If it continues to *think* of itself as Olympus, it will *be* Olympus. Otherwise, it may not be anything."

Tschirgi's lesson was underscored for me by Maria Goepfert Mayer, one of the three Nobelists at La Jolla (the others are Harold Urey and Robert W. Holley, who is at the Salk Institute). A physicist born in Poland in 1906, Dr. Mayer is a quiet woman who dresses without vanity and wears her gray hair quite short. She is economical both of words and motion,

and, as we talked, virtually her only movement was to knock the ash from a succession of cigarettes. Yes, she told me, she found La Jolla very pleasant after the rigors of fifteen Chicago winters. The graduate students in physics were very good and came from every part of the country. In low temperature physics she thought San Diego was already one of the great campuses of the world. The provincialism of the community did not distress her. "I must confess that I know very few people outside the university," she added, and I had a sudden vision of the ladies in the hotel bar.

It would not be fair to leave the impression that all of the La Jolla campus shares Dr. Mayer's austerity. Down the road toward the beach, I dropped in upon two cheerfully forthright English scientists who occupy quarters at the Institute of Geophysics and Planetary Physics. Geoffrey Burbridge is a shaggy, untidy, articulate professor of physics; his equally distinguished and handsome wife, Margaret, an astronomer, is an expert on quasars, celestial objects that are powerful sources of radio energy. The couple left Chicago to come to La Jolla because, said Mrs. Burbridge, "Urey and Mayer were here and the Lick Observatory's one-hundred-twenty-inch telescope wasn't far away."

I asked if the weather had anything to do with it.

"Oh, yes!" she cried, waving an arm toward her office window, which looked out on a gentle surf breaking on the sun-warmed beach.

Geoffrey Burbridge laughed and said, "Not long ago a Chicago scientist told me he was after one of my graduate students. 'You won't get him,' I said. 'He can't go surfing on Lake Michigan.'"

Whatever the inducements, an impressive number of highly regarded scientists began moving to La Jolla in 1958. From the University of Chicago came not only the Burbridges, Urey, and Maria Mayer but also Dr. Mayer's husband, Joseph, who became chairman of the chemistry department. From Minnesota came the mathematician Stefan Warshaw-

ski, from Stanford the biologist Clifford Grobstein, and from Yale the late David Bonner and S. Jonathan Singer, both biologists also. From Toronto came the psychologist George Mandler, from Princeton the chemist James R. Arnold, and from the University of Pennsylvania the physicist Keith A. Brueckner. From New Jersey's Bell Telephone Laboratories came the physicist Bernd Matthias. At the nearby fortress-like Salk Institute are Jonas Salk, Jacob Bronowski, Robert W. Holley, and Leslie Orgel. Although the emphasis on the university's first Oxfordlike college was on the hard sciences, appointments in other disciplines were of the quality of the economist Seymour Harris and the theatrical director Michael Langham, who turned down Lincoln Center for the Olympus on the mesa.

My 1966 San Diego visit was to end on a jarring note. The last person I talked to was the then chancellor, John Galbraith, a handsome, silver-haired, forty-nine-year-old historian. When I quoted to him Bob Tschirgi's remark on the conscious creation of an Olympian institution, Dr. Galbraith nodded. "It's even better not to develop in certain directions than to compromise for the 'best available,'" he said. "People have called this a pretty arrogant place. Well, in a sense that's true. We've been granted a start like no other university for the past sixty years." In addition to the development of the college system on the Oxbridge model,* Dr. Galbraith talked of the need for a great research library of two million or more volumes. This was essential, he said, to attract great scholars of the humane disciplines. He struck me as a man who was thoroughly at home in his job.

But the next afternoon, a rumor began to circulate on the mesa that Dr. Galbraith and one of his vice-chancellors had resigned. The rumor turned out to be true. The immediate

* Although this is the way La Jolla's college system started out, it has moved a long way from the English model. The third and newest college was scheduled to open in the fall of 1970 as a school of ethnic studies. A campus joke was that it would be called Lumumba-Zapata College.

case was said to be the removal from the regents' agenda of Dr. Galbraith's plans for the research library and for the long-range development of the campus. Somewhat earlier, brakes had been applied to the growth of the medical school. A less immediate but equally galling source of frustration was the difficulty of getting clear decisions from the elephantine administrative bureaucracy of the state university system.

Under pressure from his faculty, Dr. Galbraith was persuaded to withdraw his resignation, though, as it turned out, he was to stay only another two years. The problems that faced him back in 1966 appeared to be serious but not of the explosive order of the rebellion that had been in progress at Berkeley: would the legislature continue to give the financial support needed by the university's high ambitions? Would the increasing number of undergraduates respond to the dreams of the planners, or would the mesa become a comfortable but undemanding adjunct to the beaches, the surf, the tennis courts, and all the machinery of boys meeting girls and girls meeting boys? Would the pressure to take in as many students as possible upset the schedule for the gradual and deliberate creation of the college system? Would the university's high hopes survive its location in a hitherto intellectually undistinguished community in a part of the country that has been a notorious graveyard for high aspirations and noble ideals?

When I went back to San Diego two years later and again drove up the winding road to the mesa, I found that some of these questions had been answered, in part at least, but that they were now overshadowed by other, unforeseen problems. To put it oversimply, the Olympians had been dragged into the rough-and-tumble of the general student rebellion, and the best-known professor on campus was no longer Harold Urey but the Marxist social philosopher Herbert Marcuse, who is widely regarded as the intellectual godfather of the New Left. The testimony of his colleagues and students is that he is an extraordinarily able and stimulating teacher. Konrad Lorenz, the ethologist, has described Marcuse as

“one of those utopian and generous madmen who believe that it’s possible to build from the ground up.”

Professor Marcuse had actually been quietly in residence ever since 1965, when he had retired from Brandeis University, but the awful threat that his presence meant for San Diego was not realized until, in the course of a European trip, he became friendly with Rudi Dutschke, the West German student who had organized demonstrations against the government and the Axel Springer publishing house. News stories reported, incorrectly, that “Rudi the Red” was coming to La Jolla as a graduate student working under Dr. Marcuse. Red-blooded San Diegans leaped into a campaign of anonymous phone calls and letters that culminated in a handwritten note that Dr. Marcuse received on July 1, 1968: *Marcuse, You are a very dirty Communist dog. We give you seventy-two hours to live [sic] United States. Seventy-two hours more, Marcuse, and we kill you. Ku Klux Klan.*

Dr. Marcuse and his wife decided to leave only after their phone service had been cut off on an order given by somebody else, and took a two-week vacation in the Carmel Valley. Dr. Marcuse’s return to San Diego in the fall set off another salvo of attacks from the American Legion and the press. (San Diego has two newspapers, but they are both published by the Copley organization, and are not distinguished for the breadth or liberality of their views).

When I called Dr. Marcuse’s office, I was told that he no longer made appointments by telephone, asking that people wanting to see him write to him first. Under the circumstances, it seemed a not unreasonable precaution. I went instead to see William J. McGill, the new chancellor, a psychologist who had moved west from Columbia University, where he had been chairman of his department. A solidly built man in his middle forties with close-cropped white hair, Dr. McGill had been having some success in building up the university’s relations with the downtown power structure, but he

clearly had a long way to go. Not unexpectedly, the Marcuse case was only the symptom of a broader malaise.

"All our ancient liberal ideas are being overtaken by events," Dr. McGill told me. "Academically we're fine, but we're caught up in all the crosscurrents of anxiety that seem to have permeated the nation. Our anti-Vietnam sentiments don't sit well in San Diego. They see us as a hot place indeed, with war and racial imbalance taking up the minds of even starry-eyed kids. But it's very hard, on a campus such as ours, to see the graduate students forced to go to prison or to leave the country as alternatives to war.

"The present set of tensions is due to the sudden aggressiveness of black student groups on California campuses, and the destructive relations between the state administration and the college students. The university is being drawn into politics in a way that was never intended. Political figures are using our troubles to sustain their own causes. I'm not completely convinced this is a malign and cynical effort, but rather that they're simply trying to rule these troubles out of order.

"With Governor Reagan, I share an attitude of mutual disrespect.

"Our problems here in San Diego are enormously enhanced by the conservative community. The real heartland of conservatism is, first, the military community, which sees the major issues in terms of honor and patriotism. Real hell broke loose after some students sent a telegram of support to Zengakuren, the radical Japanese student organization, after a demonstration at our naval base at Yokosuka. Secondly, there's the elderly community, which rejects youthful unpredictability and doesn't understand the permissiveness that exists on a university campus, particularly in literature and the arts.

"The problem isn't with irrational right-wing extremists but with the conservative value system of an essentially mili-

tary community. They find it hard to understand the great gap that exists between gentlemanliness and legality.”

As he talked, Dr. McGill swung one leg over the arm of his chair and leaned back comfortably. “What’s going to sink me here,” he went on, “is the lack of understanding of the values of an academic community.” Clearly, the situation at San Diego was a long way from what he had been familiar with at Columbia.

At the end of our conversation, he said, rather wistfully I thought, that he had found it pleasant to spend an hour talking to another Easterner. I didn’t give away the fact that I’d left the East almost twenty years before, but the remark stuck with me, for it seemed to have revealed something that was important about the man. (Born in Manhattan and reared in the Bronx, Dr. McGill was educated at Fordham and Harvard and did research at MIT before going to Columbia.)

When I went back to La Jolla to talk to Dr. McGill again in the summer of 1970, we sat in the same chairs at the same coffee table, but a good deal had changed on the campus in the meantime. First of all, Dr. McGill himself had accepted an offer to become Columbia’s sixteenth president. And, since my last visit, the situation at La Jolla had become increasingly familiar. In addition to the Marcuse business, Dr. McGill had been under fire for letting Eldridge Cleaver speak on campus and for declining to become agitated (as had Max Rafferty and Ronald Reagan) about the appointment of a former San Diego graduate student named Angela Davis to teach philosophy at UCLA. (Dr. McGill once described Miss Davis as “a brilliant, beautiful black girl who is a member of the Communist Party.” We will return to her later.)

Dr. McGill had also been under fire from the Left for resisting efforts to radicalize his campus. Buildings had been occupied, rocks thrown, and windows broken. A student, a quiet, pleasant-looking, conventionally groomed young man, had sat down in the main campus plaza, poured kerosene over his clothes, and set himself afire.

As we talked about what had been going on. I did not, however, see any visible evidence of change under pressure in Dr. McGill himself. He threw his leg over the arm of his chair again, and discoursed in his disarmingly candid manner that has in it large elements of earnestness, openness, sensitivity, and humor. I was particularly interested in two things — first, what seemed to be Dr. McGill's considerable success in dealing with the growing politicalization of his campus, and, second, in the parting thoughts of this Easterner on leaving California, to which he had come five years earlier, just as I had and all the thousands of others, with the determination to start a new life in the Promised Land.

The emergence of student troubles on the La Jolla campus had come at about the same time as Dr. McGill's appointment as chancellor, and when they came they were not unfamiliar, including student protests against war research, the development of an acute self-consciousness among the black and Mexican-American students, demonstrations of sympathy during the People's Park controversy at Berkeley, opposition to the war in Indochina, and, most recently that spring, profound disturbances over the Kent State and Jackson State killings.

Dr. McGill described the *modus operandi* that seemed to have worked for him at La Jolla: "The appearance of the chancellor in the middle of a wild crowd of students can often transform a budding disruption into a heated argument that winds down into exhaustion." Such confrontations often took place at the "free speech plaza," where Chancellor McGill had on a number of occasions walked out into a crowd of excited and sometimes hostile students, talking with them until the flames seem to have died down. (The curious flavor that has developed on the La Jolla campus is nowhere as evident as it is on the plaza. When I walked across it, I stopped first at a flower-decorated shrine dedicated to the boy who had immolated himself, and then, a few yards away, at a bul-

letin board where signs offered used surfboards for sale: REAL CLEAN STICK. NO DINGS AT ALL.)

"Bill's very tough in a confrontation," one of his aides told me. "His eyes shut down and become narrow. He crosses his arms. He has a nervous habit of moving his fingers." He laughed. "Other times, I've seen him sit down on the edge of a platform, his legs crossed yoga style, and just rap with the kids."

Another staffer said, "During one confrontation with students, a bearded, unkempt, lanky kid shook his finger at the chancellor and said, 'McGill, if you don't give in to every one of these demands, you'll get your ass in a sling.'"

"Afterward, I told him, 'If it had been me, I would have hit the kid.'"

"Bill said, 'No. Don't you see — he's paranoid.'"

As a psychologist, Dr. McGill is more than usually sensitive to his own motives also, and on several occasions he has paid tribute to the psychic requirements he adopted at San Diego. On the day after the Kent State killings, Dr. McGill told the Academic Senate, who were meeting to debate a strike vote, "On Sunday a man asked me how it's possible to have a job like mine and still be a decent man. When you deal with violence you develop a kind of hardened competitive edge. When you're in the struggle, you fight. There are times when I do not quite trust myself. Fortunately, it is my conviction that I have the switch which enables me to turn that off and be a human being and understand the deep concerns of this community and the students in it, their sense of revulsion for what seems to be happening to a whole array of ostensibly humane institutions."

When, in talking about political activity on the campus, I used the phrase "student unrest," Dr. McGill interrupted me, saying, "Violence on campuses at present is unrelated to student unrest. The violent elements on campus are very small minority groups. . . . I know that many of the tough radicals who show up late at night have nothing to do with the

student body. I think these violent groups are extremely dangerous and increasingly desperate, but that is not a likely consequence of increased politicalization of the university.” *

Expanding on the theme of politicalization, he went on, “I mean, first of all, an increasing preoccupation of the university with problems it cannot resolve in a rational context — that is, an effort to use the university and its facilities as a base of political pressure. The lobbying activities of students are perfectly acceptable and are within all the rules of the American political process to the extent they do not involve the university in some kind of an official way. But when offices begin to spring up on campus in behalf of somebody’s candidacy, then the question of official involvement of the university becomes very real and then political retaliation occurs.

“I’m worried about that because it’s a natural. It’s the kind of thing that an enthusiastic group of university people will do. It seems to me that a university community is the most politically conscious and one of the most politically inept groups in society. The reason is that the political arts are not known on campus. The primary political arts are persuasion and compromise, and these matters never really develop to any degree on a university campus.

“We’re political amateurs, and the enthusiasm of political movements is likely to manifest itself in ways that are rather more dangerous to the university’s status as a special place where no real political commitments of any sort are made. It’s not likely to result in violence. It’s likely to result in major embarrassments.”

We talked for a while about the situation in California, where, I suggested, the dominance of the publicly supported

* On one occasion, Dr. McGill had San Diego police standing by, but they didn’t enter the campus. His most effective legal maneuver in dealing with hard militants was to go to court to obtain a document forbidding the offending parties from appearing on the campus for two weeks. These were prepared in advance, filled out as required, and sometimes served in lots of a couple of dozen.

campuses had created a situation uniquely favorable for direct conflict with politicians like Ronald Reagan. As a private institution, I said, Columbia would be spared this hazard. Dr. McGill disagreed entirely. The process we have been seeing in California, he said, was considerably advanced, but we could expect it to develop in New York and elsewhere. "It does appear to me," he said, "that the kind of confrontation with the political arm of the state that is very clearly visible and highly developed in California is something that is just beginning to show in New York."

I wondered if the emergence of this phenomenon during the years he had spent at La Jolla had been the root cause of his changing perspective toward Columbia and his decision to leave California and return to New York. Only, he replied, in an oblique way. "I left the city and Columbia because I was convinced that both were dying and I came here to make a new life in my academic discipline, and did it and was very happy. Then I became sucked into circumstances that put me in this post. I then began to confront the problems of the university in the community, in the state legislature, in the governor's office, and I was genuinely frightened by what I saw. I saw the degree of alienation of our thought from the social context in which we worked and I saw the very, very grave danger we were in, and it seemed to me that these two forces — the militant Left on the campus and the right-wing backlash essentially in the political sphere — were headed on a collision course. There were only a limited number of capable and rational people who could hold the middle ground and do it successfully, and that got me committed.

"I find myself able to work in this context of constant pressure, anxiety, and militancy. It somehow doesn't bug me. My wife would perhaps not agree, but I can sleep at night. So I found myself in a very extraordinary set of circumstances. I found just a total reorientation of what I wanted to do with my life.

"And then it appeared to me that the struggle out here is

everywhere. It isn't at all that New York is dying or that Columbia is dying. We're all dying in different ways because our society is in decay and if you're going to change it, then the question is where can you be more effective. That was the basis of my decision."

There was a pause while we stirred the coffee his secretary had brought us, and then he said reflectively, "It was a hell of a thing to discover that. The process of commitment took about a year."

The conversation swung away from the academic world and to Dr. McGill's feelings on leaving California. After characterizing California as a "rootless community with no really substantial base attachment to the soil and no stable set of values and a kind of political anarchy that results from it," he went on to say, "It's obvious that this is the prototype of modern America. It's very obvious to me that that is what is most frightening about the prospects for us all.

"That's why I've said that I think this political pressure that is developing in California should not be dismissed as being something local. I think we're building up a national movement and my own feeling is that we're moving rather too rapidly into a period in which some of our Bill of Rights freedoms are going to be severely cut back in order to produce a more orderly society, and when that happens I fear for a lot of noble spirits."

25. *Bloodbath*

Until the troubles at Isla Vista, the University of California campus at Santa Barbara had enjoyed the reputation of being a country club, undistinguished either for hard scholar-

ship or for political earnestness. In retrospect, Santa Barbara and Isla Vista have assumed a central place in the history of the conflict between the Sacramento government and the students, and the burning of the Bank of America in Isla Vista has taken on some of the attributes of the Reichstag fire — to the extent at least that it gave Ronald Reagan an opportunity to test how far the citizens were prepared to go with him down the road that leads to bloodshed and death.

As is the case with the campuses at La Jolla and Santa Cruz, the campus at Santa Barbara is located near an unusually attractive seaside area favored as a retirement home by elderly people of means. Living is expensive in Santa Barbara, and long-hairs are regarded with disfavor. The students live elsewhere. Three-fourths of the population of the suburb of Isla Vista, twelve miles from Santa Barbara, consists of university students living in what is essentially a high-rent ghetto of a very special sort. The student population of Isla Vista had grown from thirty-five hundred in 1954 to twelve thousand in 1969, giving it a density equal to Tokyo's. A university committee charged with looking into the causes of the troubles found Isla Vista landlords to be greedy, the police hostile and not above acting illegally, and basic municipal services deficient. There were (and still are) few older residents whose mere presence would have diluted the concentration of the restless young.

Although most Californians had never heard of Isla Vista before the burning of the bank, there had been previous rumbles, including demonstrations against the firing of a popular teacher. There had been other troubles, some having to do with campus matters, some with the trials of the "Chicago Seven," and some having to do with the quality of life in Isla Vista itself. In the course of these troubles, the Bank of America, whose four-hundred-thousand-dollar branch occupied a prominent place in Isla Vista's unprepossessing downtown, had somehow come to symbolize the "System" and the "Establishment."

Late in February 1970, a crowd of students that can only be described as a mob boiled into Isla Vista's business district, set the Bank of America on fire, and watched it burn to the ground. (Nobody seems to have been particularly angry at the Bank of America as an institution. The bank's chairman, Louis B. Lundborg, is a noted dove among businessmen. Both before and after the fire he expressed his strong opposition to the Indochina war as well as his sympathy for many of the positions taken by young people in Isla Vista and elsewhere. His bank apparently was burned simply because it was there.)

In the first week of April, at an affair in Yosemite National Park, Governor Reagan declared in reference to campus violence that "if it takes a bloodbath . . . let's get it over with." It was clearly Isla Vista that he had in mind. (Later, the governor described as "neurotic" anybody who took his "figure of speech" seriously. Disingenuously, he wondered aloud that "anyone would be advocating solving a problem by bathing the students in blood." He also said, however, "a great many people have been slapping me on the back. They don't figure it was a wrong figure of speech at all.")

Californians had to wait only ten days to be visited by a tragic demonstration of the unpredictable consequences of Mr. Reagan's appeal to blood. On a night in April when there was trouble in Isla Vista, a twenty-two-year-old senior named Kevin Moran was shot to death as he tried to stamp out an incendiary fire somebody else had started in the temporary replacement for the Bank of America. So far as could be determined, the 30-06 slug that killed young Moran came from the rifle of a policeman.*

In June, the Santa Barbara police went berserk and, charg-

* The Bank of America opened a new building in Isla Vista in time for the 1970 academic year. It was described as a concrete and steel building in the Spanish baroque style, without windows and with a roof slanted so that firebombs would roll back on rioters. A plaque at the entrance reads: "For social change, fair play and peace. Kevin P. Moran, April 18, 1970."

ing curfew violations, invaded Isla Vista apartments, smashed furnishings, and dragged young men and women down the stairs and into squad cars. Prisoners were Maced indiscriminately inside their cells, threatened with being killed, forced to strip, and obliged to stand all night with their noses against the walls. The process of orderly arrest and detention had broken down so far that it took twelve hours for a deputy district attorney, who had been arrested on the lawn of his house, to identify himself to his jailers.

Reporting on Isla Vista in the *New York Times Magazine*, Winthrop Griffith wrote, "The Isla Vista battles did not represent just a widening of the generation gap and political polarization. This is social fragmentation, a complete disintegration of all the systems of thought and order which have usually worked through the nation's history."

A few months later, Mr. Reagan was handed an entirely unexpected bonus, which, added to the political effect of the Isla Vista troubles, clinched his hold on the hearts and minds of his supporters. This was the case of Angela Davis, which had been simmering along inconclusively as an academic freedom case at UCLA for several months, but which in August exploded into gunfire with four deaths outside the courthouse of Marin County.

Angela Davis, a doctoral candidate in the philosophy department at San Diego (where she studied with Herbert Marcuse), had been hired in the fall of 1969 to teach philosophy at UCLA with a two-year renewable contract. Her courses were in dialectical materialism and Kant and idealism. (Her doctoral thesis was on the concept of force in the philosophy of Kant.) From all accounts, Miss Davis was a first-rate teacher. Not only did her students report on her excellence, but her colleagues agreed that she was more than usually gifted. When, after the trouble began, a hostile member of the board of regents sat in on one of her classes, he reported, disappointingly, "I could find no fault with what took place."

The troubles began when Miss Davis let it be known that

like Bettina Aptheker she was a member of the Communist Party. Furthermore, she was a militant black, and at public meetings she displayed her command of revolutionary rhetoric. When Mr. Reagan, Dr. Rafferty, and the conservative majority of the board of regents decided to show their muscles and fire Miss Davis, she became the center of an academic freedom battle in the classic mold. Not only Miss Davis but also her department head and, in fact, anybody who had encouraged her academic career found himself in the line of fire. Of course the regents won, and at the end of the 1970 school year she was fired.

If this had been all, the Davis case would still have been notable for demonstrating the contempt of the Sacramento government for the traditional processes of university administration and its determination to assume powers and prerogatives that are not usually placed in the hands of state politicians. But this was not to be the end of the Davis case, for early in August, Ronald Reagan was handed one of the most astonishing gifts that any politician up for re-election could hope for.

On August 7, a young black revolutionary named Jonathan Jackson smuggled three guns into the Marin County courthouse, where a San Quentin convict was on trial for knifing a guard. Two other convicts were present as defense witnesses. Jackson produced his guns, and in the ensuing escape attempt, the trial judge, Harold J. Haley, was seized as a hostage, along with a prosecuting attorney and two women jurors. Jackson and the prisoners he had freed herded the hostages outside and into a waiting van. Here the escape came to a bloody end. The van was fired on by San Quentin guards, who are instructed to ignore hostages, and in the ensuing gunfight Judge Haley, Jackson, and two of the convicts were killed.

The next week it was discovered that all four guns used in the escape attempt had been bought by Angela Davis or by somebody using her name. One gun had been bought only

two days before the shootings. Miss Davis was accused of murder and kidnapping. She disappeared, and her name was placed on the FBI's Ten Most Wanted list until she was arrested in New York in October. Angela Davis's extraordinary life, from her origins in an affluent and talented black family to her brilliant academic career to her criminal trial for murder and kidnapping was certain to occupy a central place in any future examination of the social phenomena produced in a disintegrating civilization. Not the least disturbing aspect of the case was the depth of the ideological chasm that opened between those citizens, both black and white, who looked on Miss Davis as a folk heroine, and the state, which regarded her as a criminal.

In the community of aggressive young black militants, the escape attempt at the San Rafael courthouse became translated into a great revolutionary act. Jackson was given a hero's funeral in the ghetto of West Oakland, attended by eight hundred people and kept in order by Black Panthers in full uniform. The principal speaker was Huey P. Newton, himself just released from prison. Mr. Newton described young Jackson as "a true revolutionary, a black Communist guerrilla in the highest stage of development . . . a soldier of the people," and went on to declare, "We should weep for those of us who remain in bondage. Without freedom life is meaningless. We have allies everywhere; people all over the world are rising up. . . ."

In the governor's mansion in Sacramento, all of this was like manna from heaven. In the political campaign that opened after Labor Day, the unfortunate Democratic candidate for governor, Jess Unruh, who had once been the best-known state legislator in the country, simply disappeared from sight.

Five. Eros Unleashed

The flashing and golden pageant of California . . .

— Walt Whitman

The Love Generation is simply bursting with creativity. . . .

— Ralph J. Gleason

The Californians are an idle, thriftless people, and can make nothing for themselves. The country abounds in grapes, yet they buy, at a great price, bad wine made in Boston. . . .

— Richard Henry Dana

California is mainly present-oriented, shallow-rooted, amnesic.

— Robert Kirsch

Anybody who thinks this is all about drugs has his head in a bag. . . . Right now you've got the ways that romanticism historically ends up in trouble, lends itself to authoritarianism. . . . How long do you think it'll take for that to happen?

— A San Francisco psychiatrist to Joan Didion

The dominion of Eros is, from the beginning, also that of Thanatos.

— Herbert Marcuse

26. *The Human Be-in*

Although a straight type from Fresno or Red Bluff (or New York City) might understandably have a hard time distinguishing the long-haired, unconventionally dressed college kid from the long-haired unconventionally dressed hippie, particularly so when the two groups come together, as they did during the People's Park affair, they have, aside from a fondness for pot and rock, very little in common.

The campus activist, whether white, black, or yellow, is an intensely political animal; the hippie is intensely a-political. The activist is intensely literate; the hippie belongs to the post-literate world of Marshall McLuhan. The activist is the inheritor of the awful burden of morality that Western man has struggled under since the apostle Paul; the hippie is bedazzled by the Eastern message of being. (What would you do, the Zen master asked, if you were in danger of falling from a cliff and the strawberry plant to which you were clinging began to give way? The right answer: *eat the strawberries.*)

In individual cases, the distinctions may become blurred, as when we are asked to classify taxonomically an acid-dropping post-literate dropout graduate student of mathematics who has no interest in politics. Yet, by and large, the hippies and the activists are polar opposites rather than natural allies. Where they come together, it is in their common denial of the Great Society, with its choices, politically, between the Republican Party and the Democratic Party, and, socially, between lower-middle, middle-middle, and upper-middle. In each case, however, some element of their style can be found in the beats.

According to Warren Hinkle, the flamboyant former editor of *Ramparts* and currently editor of *Scanlan's*, it all began with a poetry reading at the 6 Gallery on Fillmore Street in San Francisco on an evening in 1955. Kenneth Rexroth was the moderator. In the audience were Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Jack Kerouac, and the man who was the model for Kerouac's heroes, Neal Cassady. Reading their poetry were Michael McClure, Philip Lamantia, Gary Snyder, Philip Whalen, and Allen Ginsberg, who read part of an unfinished poem called "Howl." (*I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed by madness, starving hysterical naked/ dragging themselves through the negro streets at dawn looking for an angry fix/ angelheaded hipsters burning for the ancient heavenly connection to the starry dynamo in the machinery of night . . .*)

Hinkle sees two distinct strains in the group, one a fascist trend embodied then in Kerouac and in more recent days by Ken Kesey, the Hell's Angels, and Dr. Timothy Leary. The other side was "a cultural reaction to the existential brinkmanship forced on them by the cold war, and a lively attack on the concurrent rhetoric of complacency and self-satisfaction that pervaded the literary establishment all the way from the *Atlantic Monthly* to Lionel Trilling."

"The early distant warnings of the drug-based culture that would dominate the Haight-Ashbury a decade later were there in the early days of North Beach," Mr. Hinkle goes on to say. "Marijuana was as popular as Coke at a Baptist wedding, and the available hallucinogens — peyote and mescaline — were part of the beat rebellion. . . . And beat parties, whether they served peyote, marijuana or near beer, were rituals, community sacraments, setting the format for contemporary hippie rituals."

Except for a couple of casual conversations in City Lights (Ferlinghetti's bookstore) and an evening or two of drinking beer at the Coffee Gallery, I had no personal connection at all with the beats. I was living in the suburbs, teaching school, working as a stringer for *Newsweek*, and recovering

from the total financial disaster represented by my second novel.

When the new styles of the young began to make an impact on me it was largely through my son John, who had been three years old at the time of the poetry reading at the 6 Gallery. The last time I remember him as being square, in appearance anyway, was when he was twelve years old, which was in 1964. I happen to remember the occasion because I took him with me on a trip to Seattle, and commemorated the occasion by snapping a photograph as he sat in his seat on the plane. He is wearing a brown blazer and dark slacks, a shirt with a button-down collar, a striped tie, and black loafers. Only his hair, which extends about mid-ear, looks anything but absolutely straight.

Since then, John has gone the full route, so far at least as his appearance goes. Last summer, his thick brown hair hung down his back to a point between his shoulder blades; for a trip to Mexico, where long-hairs are not welcome, he trimmed it to a point well above his collar. His customary attire is a hickory shirt, a vest that once belonged to somebody's dark gray suit, blue jeans, and work boots. A red bandanna is often knotted around his neck. He has a pair of khaki slacks he wears on formal occasions and an ancient tweed jacket, but he doesn't own a necktie, or a pair of ordinary shoes, or a suit. His girl friends wear an extraordinary variety of clothes, with skirts that are either very short or very long. They are quite beautiful. His male friends all look pretty much like him.

(Of my other two children, Steve wears his hair long, but at eleven is a little young to be part of the youth culture. His passion is the San Francisco Giants. Annie, sixteen, is a tennis bum who owns various championships up and down the Pacific Coast. There is, however, hope for her, as I found out one evening as I was driving her and her doubles partner home from Golden Gate Park. We had just been told that a woman the girls know was dying of cancer. I asked them

what they would do if they had just six months to live. Annie's partner thought for a moment and answered that she'd move down to Disneyland. Annie waited a little longer and then said thoughtfully, "First of all, I'd throw away my tennis racket . . .")

As is, I suppose, evident, I am a horrible example of a permissive parent, and, except for some fatherly comments when John's hair used to fall into his plate at the dinner table, I haven't strenuously meddled with his style. In fact, I rather admire him and his friends for their casual attitude toward considerations of college and career that were so important to me when I was a senior in high school. (My own experience underlines the wisdom that the kids have in these matters. Encouraged by career-minded teachers, I spent two and a half years in engineering school, becoming increasingly wretched, until I was offered an honorable wartime escape into the navy.)

At any rate, although the drug scene distressed me, I felt a general sense of benevolence toward the hippies when they began to flower in the decaying residences around the intersections of Haight and Ashbury streets. Tidings of the movement were occasionally brought home by John, who in the meantime had transferred from our suburban high school to a rather idiosyncratic private school in the city. When, in the spring of 1967, plans were announced for a vast gathering of hippies in Golden Gate Park, I volunteered to give a lift to John and a couple of his friends.

The kids excused themselves as soon as they decently could and left me alone on a grassy embankment on the side of the Polo Field. I ate a salami-on-French-roll sandwich and drank a can of beer while I watched about twenty thousand people — some of them very hip and some of them very square milling around the field. Three or four feet down the slope from me sat a group of four picnickers. The young men were bearded and had braided flowers into their shaggy hair while the girls, with their long, straight hair falling over

their shoulders, their pale scrubbed faces, and their short dresses, looked like overgrown children who had been let out to play in the park. The one thing that particularly distinguished these picnickers from all the other thousands of hairy young men and pale-faced girls who were eating, drinking, playing pennywhistles, ringing bells, smoking pot, and nuzzling each other on the broad Polo Field was that the ground cloth on which they were picnicking was a large American flag.

One of the men turned to a thin, blonde girl, evidently a stranger to him, who was sitting a couple of feet away, and invited her to join them. When she moved over and sat on the flag, he offered her his half-eaten apple; she gravely nibbled on it a while and then gave it back. Just at this point, a policeman arrived, a motorcycle cop in shiny boots, followed by two young fellows who, with their trim crew cuts, ironed chino slacks and starched sports shirts, looked as if they might be students at the Jesuit high school on the edge of the park.

"Get off the flag," said the cop, speaking rather flatly, as if he were holding down the safety valve on a good head of steam.

The hip picnickers got off the flag without arguing. One of the parochial school boys took the free edge of the flag while the other took the staff, and together they rolled it up. A picnicker asked if they could have the flag back. The cop told him he'd have to come to the stationhouse, and marched off with the flag-bearing schoolboys, all three faces sternly set in the consciousness of having done their duty.

How you react to this story will tell you a good deal about who you are. I myself was delighted at my good luck in happening on such a convenient summary of some of the main themes that ran through the hip scene, a scene that was being hailed both as the unveiling of a brave new world of universal love and kindness, and as a grave and imminent threat to

physical health and mental stability of a generation of young people.

The picnic on the flag was, of course, a public advertisement of the hippies' disregard for the conventional pieties. The shared apple was a symbol of love (or perhaps more accurately of "love"), and the whole transaction, like the flowers in their hair, was filled with a yearning for spontaneity and simplicity and open communication. The cop and the schoolboys were the incarnation of outraged society, while the passivity of the picnickers in the face of this assault from the Establishment came out of a long tradition of nonviolence.

And, as I looked around, the matter of the flag settled, it became clear that a strong religious element pervaded this Gathering of the Tribes. To begin with, there were the obvious things: the call to communion on a conch shell from a Buddhist monastery, the intoning of Zen chants and Hindu mantras, incense burning everywhere, and the miraculous appearance of an unannounced parachutist who disappeared as mysteriously as he appeared. Presiding on a raised platform were two candidates for the mantle of messiah and a fair approximation of the Earth Mother. The messiahs were Dr. Timothy Leary, the prophet of LSD, and the bearded poet Allen Ginsberg, splendid in a suit of white Hindu pajamas. The Earth Mother was Lenore Kandel — Sister Lenore Kandel, as somebody on the platform called her — a fine, full-breasted figure of a woman, the potency of whose poems had been endorsed by the San Francisco police, who were trying to suppress them.

There were less obvious things, of which the most important was a carefully nourished sense of community, of a gathering together on behalf of some Higher Principles, no matter how fuzzily they may have been defined. New religions always begin as a rebellion against the existing, visible world, and this seemed as true of the hip movement as it is of the Black Muslims, the current Japanese phenomenon called Soka Gakkai ("Value-Creating Society"), or, for that matter,

of primitive Christianity. All of these religions share a conscious denial of the social and moral values of the workaday world and revolve around gatherings of the minority who expect to be saved. "Now listen, all you beautiful people," cried somebody on the platform. "The old world is gone and a new world is coming."

If a new world is indeed coming, it will apparently be inhabited by a population that in many ways doesn't think like you and me, and notoriously doesn't look like you and me in our herringbone suits and button-down shirts and striped ties. Take, for instance, that most visible trademark of the hip believer, long hair. What is it about an unbarbered young man that can cause otherwise mild-tempered citizens to risk their blood pressures and threaten measures of correction so dreadful they would severely embarrass a Turkish bandit?

I don't know the whole answer, but I do know that there is nothing new about the hypersensitivity of civilized man in the matter of hair, nor is there anything novel in the connection between hair and religion. Wasn't it Saint Paul himself who declared that long hair was a shame unto a man? A thousand years later, another saint, Wulstan, the bishop of Worcester, took to whipping out a knife whenever a long-haired communicant knelt before him. Cutting off a good handful of hair, Saint Wulstan would then throw it into the startled offender's face, threatening him with hellfire unless he chopped off the rest. (I have been reminded of this story whenever I have tried to reason mildly with John.) Is it any wonder that with two thousand years of such antihair history behind us, we decently barbered citizens should react so violently to men with flowing ringlets?

Then there were the girls, with *their* long hair and their penitential dresses, and their bare feet and air of holy poverty. Once, when I was eating a hamburger at a joint on Haight Street, one of these girls, a red-haired sparrowlike creature, perched on the stool beside mine and asked, "Any spare change?"

I asked how much she was trying to raise.

"Two dollars," she said, blowing a soap bubble with one of those plastic outfits you can buy at the dime store.

I asked what she needed it for.

"Something personal," she said.

I forked over a quarter, and she thanked me nicely and swooped off to put the bite on another prosperous-looking type who was coming in the door. As I watched her go, I was reminded that the hippie girls' disregard for brassieres creates another curious reaction in the conventional mind. Does a girl become morally suspect because she prefers to go about as God made her — flat, or pendulous, or firm and high — and not as the ideal breast is imagined by the suspension engineers employed by the manufacturers of underwear? It is a curious business.

The style of the hippies is a style of poverty, and poverty is, of course, a principal ingredient of most active religions — witness the camel and the needle's eye or Prince Siddhartha sitting under the Bodhi tree. Clearly a good many of these kids didn't *have* to wear grubby clothes and sleep in slummy rooms and take their soup bowls down to the park in the afternoon for a handout. Even when they were begging spare change, the accents of their speech gave away the plain fact that they'd been raised in warm, dry, roach-free houses in decent neighborhoods rather than in real slums and ghettos.

If this were all of it, if the hip scene had consisted merely of a generation of middle-class youngsters deliberately putting down and shucking off the cluttered, straitjacketed world of us squares with our drip-dry suits, and our cars fouling the air, and our brains going toward the design and manufacture of such abominations as the SST, and our energies going into a bitter and obscene war — if this were all of it, I would have hustled right down to Haight Street to join the scene, for those of us who belong to what somebody (perhaps with a bitter sense of humor) has called the Command Generation have certainly not managed things gloriously.

Going barefoot and wearing your hair long and trying earnestly to be spontaneous and honest and not harming anybody else and blowing soap bubbles and dancing to bands with names like the Grateful Dead and the Quicksilver Messenger Service is not necessarily a contemptible way of life. It may perhaps even be preferable to being a young executive on the way up with too much alcohol in your life, a mortgage you can't afford, a boss who demands unceasing admiration, and a third baby and first divorce on their respective ways.

But of course this wasn't all, and sooner or later one had to tangle with pot and LSD and speed and Dr. Timothy Leary and Allen Ginsberg.

I've tried to keep a cool head about narcotics ever since the first day I went out to San Quentin, when I found that about a third of my students, the most interesting third as it turned out, were users. Even so, I was, to use an old-fashioned phrase, surprised and shocked when, in the midst of the blooming of the flower children, a doctor at San Francisco General Hospital estimated that ten thousand young San Franciscans, mainly in the Haight-Ashbury, were dropping acid, and that about four of them a day were ending up in the psychiatric ward on a bad trip.

Like a good many other otherwise respectable people, I incline to the opinion that marijuana is probably not a particularly dangerous substance — no more dangerous than alcohol, say, which, God knows, is dangerous enough — but I remain unconvinced of the innocuous or laudable effects of LSD or speed. I have even graver doubts of the good faith and sanity of the men who have nominated themselves the messiahs of the psychedelic cult.

The thing that takes a little while to penetrate is that these middle-aged men are really serious about what they conceive as their mission. I was reminded of this when, looking around the Print Mint, a great echoing cavern that was one of the more notable establishments on Haight Street, I stopped to admire a huge close-up photograph of Timothy Leary. I was

struck forcibly with the thought that Dr. Leary's face is the face of a parish priest, a spoiled priest, but a priest nevertheless.

I don't like Dr. Leary. I don't like the way he talks and I don't like the way he acts and I don't like his apparent compulsion to mess around with the lives of young people. Let us remember that when he was dismissed from Harvard — a place of almost infinite tolerance — it was not for experimenting with LSD but for persisting in using undergraduates in his experiments after he had been firmly warned not to. At the Gathering of the Tribes, he told us, "Turn on to the scene, tune in to what is happening, and drop out — of high school, college, grad school, junior executive, senior executive — and follow me, the hard way." Listen to that voice again, the important part is the last: *and follow me, the hard way.*

This was the voice either of a charlatan or of a mad messiah. In fact, it was the voice of an unfrocked professor who has taken it upon himself to lead a latter-day children's crusade, and who was surrounded by some men who in their own ways are as fey as he is himself.

Dr. Richard Alpert, who plays John the Baptist to Dr. Leary's messiah, has explained, "See, Tim's being cast into the master role. But master roles really don't fit into Western culture, particularly. And in the East, it's very appropriate to go to a guy and say, 'You know. I don't. I lay my life down before you. You do anything you want.' But it's not gonna work here, and Tim doesn't take on masters."

This is reassuring, but Dr. Leary himself and his admirers are witnesses to the contrary. I missed it myself, but Margot Patterson Doss, who writes for the San Francisco *Chronicle*, reported admiringly that when, during the Gathering of the Tribes, she saw Dr. Leary wandering through the meadow outside the Polo Field and giving passersby the palms-together blessing that conveys God's greetings, he was embraced by some of his followers and pointed out by others as the "holy man."

In any case, Dr. Alpert didn't seem to me to have a very firm grip on the world as it is. Listen to him again: "I mean, you realize that in about seven or eight years the psychedelic population of the United States will be able to vote anybody into office they want to, right?"

No, no, wrong. By the time this book is five years old, you'll have as hard a time finding anybody who remembers what psychedelia was all about as you do now finding somebody who remembers that "beat" was short for "beatific." In the meantime, the followers of the messiah have begun showing symptoms of distress, and the Haight-Ashbury, where it all began, has turned into a hard scene where the drug business is the neighborhood business and where you don't go without risking unpleasantness or worse. This twisting and corrupting of the best instincts of our young people fits all too well into the emerging pattern of the parafascist society.

(To turn to pleasanter things, I would like to add a note about Allen Ginsberg. He is, to begin with, a genuine poet and consequently, by definition, a holy madman we should protect and cherish as the Muslims protect and cherish the afflicted of Allah. Unlike Dr. Leary, whose public personality is rather lumpish, Ginsberg, who looks like a friendly and inspired bear, has always given me the impression that he finds the world an extraordinarily interesting place and that he is personally having one hell of a fine time. Like the poet he is, he makes it his business to stir up the citizenry, and he is almost always worth listening to. Listen: "Abruptly then, I will make a first proposal: on one level symbolic, but to be taken as literally as possible — it may shock some and delight others — that everybody who hears my voice, directly or indirectly, try the chemical LSD at least once, every man, woman and child American in good health over the age of fourteen — that, if necessary, we have a mass emotional nervous breakdown once and for all — that we see bankers laughing in their revolving doors with blank staring eyes." It's

nonsense, but that bit about the bankers is touched with the true bardic madness.)

As I left the Polo Field, I was stopped by a young girl who was handing out scraps of paper to the passersby. I couldn't make out the words she had scrawled in pencil in a childish hand and asked her to interpret it for me.

"Love," she said. "You know, *love*."

"And what am I supposed to do now?" I asked.

"Go out and practice it," she said impatiently, as if I were evidently slow-witted.

Well, it's not that simple, and the girl struck me as a sort of empty-headed child, and the hippies have talked about love until you wonder if they know what it means, but the fact remains that love is still a pretty good word and is just possibly our only salvation.

27. *Indian Birth Control Pills*

Cedarville lies in the Surprise Valley in Modoc County, the ultimate northeast corner of California and the part of the state that is farthest from the great cities. Modoc is a place of high plateaus, pine and cedar forests, sagebrush flats, broad fields of hay, and mountains. Ducks and Canada geese, whistling swans and sandhill cranes fly over it. There are mule deer and the state's largest surviving band of pronghorn antelope. To the Modockers, the rest of us Californians are "those people down below."

To the west of Cedarville rise the Warner Mountains, a lovely, forested range. To the east, a high desert stretches away into Nevada. Cedarville is virtually a one-street town,

with the main street running out to the county fairgrounds. The people of Cedarville raise cattle, sheep, and seed potatoes. Golden's is the place to eat and drink.

When Bill, a photographer who was working with me, and I sat down at the bar at Golden's a little before noon on a warm fall Saturday, the other drinker closest to us was a jaunty young man wearing a Stetson. He was drinking with an older fellow whose battered face looked rather like the actor Lee Marvin's. The older man, who was wearing jeans, seemed to be somewhat taken in drink.

"Man, but what a night I had!" the younger fellow said. I had the impression he had raised his voice a notch for our benefit. "First down on one tit and then down on the other. I was pumping like an oil derrick until the sun came up."

"She go to work this morning?" his friend asked.

"She went to work smiling," the younger fellow said.

The older man sighed. "How about another beer?"

They drank their next beer quickly, and the younger fellow turned and asked if he could buy us a round. We allowed as how he could, having already discovered that Modockers are the world's most hospitable people.

The bartender brought four bottles of Olympia and we talked for a while about the presidential campaign. The young fellow said he was for George Wallace. "I don't go along with *everything* he says," the young man told us, "but there's got to be an end to all this demonstrating and crime and all that sort of stuff." I asked how the men he worked with felt about it. "Oh, they're all for Wallace too," he said. The older man nodded. I ordered another round of beer.

As we drank our beer, I was reminded of old Charley Shepherd, whom Bill and I had visited on his farm on the other side of the county. Splendidly bearded, Charley had been justly proud of himself. "I came out here where people told me I couldn't grow anything," he had said. "Now I have a vegetable garden, onions, potatoes, a hundred hogs and thirty head of goats."

We had talked politics. Charley had squinted at us and declared, "Down in LA if they'd mowed those fellows down with machine guns, there wouldn't be any more riots in the United States." Reminded of attempts to enact a gun law, Charley had looked ominous and dramatic and said, "A lot of people around here are going to grease their guns and put them in boxes and bury them against the day when they'll need them."

I enjoyed Charley, but I wondered how many other people were thinking as he did.

A couple of Indian girls appeared at the end of the bar.* They weren't drinking but were getting change for the cigarette machine. They were young, broad-faced, dark, but not bad looking. The young fellow in the Stetson greeted them by name and asked, "Have you tried those birth control pills I told you about?" The girls giggled and shook their heads. Laughing, the man told us they were maids at the hotel next door.

"I got something for you girls," he said, taking a couple of dollar bills from his wallet. The girls giggled again. The bartender took the money and walked down the length of the bar and gave the money to the girls. They giggled once more and one of them said, "Thanks," in a shy voice. They left.

"They're a couple of good kids," the young fellow said.

I asked him to explain the joke about the birth control pills.

"Well," he said, "sometimes when we're working out in the desert we come across round stones that look like they've been worked by the Indians in the old days. I brought a couple of them back and asked the girls if they knew what they were. They said they didn't. I told them the stones were Indian birth control pills, but if they wanted to use them they

* Cedarville isn't far from the great lava beds in which in 1872 and 1873 a band of seventy Modoc fighting men held off a thousand white troopers and volunteers for six months. This was the last battle of the war that the historian Hubert Howe Bancroft called "one of the last human hunts of civilization, and the basest and most brutal of all."

had to remember never to run too fast or the pills would drop out.”

He took a swig of beer and said, “Isn’t that a gas?” and I said it sure was. I wondered if it was one of the Indian girls he’d slept with the night before, but then I decided it wasn’t very likely.

28. *The Life and Death of Morning Star*

Love among the hippies meant not only the love of men and women or of parents and children but love for the human race. This was the great promise: Eros triumphant and Thanatos conquered. We were to be offered an alternative orientation to the parafascist orientation. The old dream of salvation took on clearer outlines and new colors. (We are all salvationists out here.) Even we of the older generations were touched and we wished them well, envious as we were of their commitment to transcend the corruption of the Great Society and come out on the other side reborn.

Within a half hour after I had walked up a steep hill and through a grove of redwoods into the Morning Star Ranch, a rural commune north of San Francisco, I found myself stripped to my shorts, attempting to hold a yoga position called the Thunderbolt. There were six of us in the hillside clearing: Sandy, a black boy who had been protesting that he wanted no part of yoga and was now complaining that the cruel exercise had given him a charleyhorse; a young chicano who was already quite expert; an army veteran with his name tattooed on his shoulder; a boy I shall call Milt, who with his ragged black beard, his long, frizzly hair, and his thick glasses mended with adhesive tape looked the epitome of the hippie;

myself, white of skin and stiff of muscle; and Lou Gottlieb, the bearded musician and musicologist who owns the property and was the spiritual and temporal leader of the community.

"Man, that bumblebee's bothering me," Sandy said, swatting at an insect that was hovering over his back.

"Leave him alone, he's just trying to make friends," Gottlieb said. "You're probably the first spade he's ever seen."

Sandy snorted and tried an exercise called the Cobra while Gottlieb exhorted us to stretch our necks backward until we could feel the flash of enlightenment that is said to come to the adept. While the rest of us were straining, Sandy suddenly stood up and, pulling on his clothes, announced, "I got to call my wife."

"You have to do *what?*" Gottlieb demanded.

"Call my wife, man."

Gottlieb laughed and said, "Oh, bullshit."

"I mean it," Sandy said desperately. "I got to call the old lady."

Gottlieb laughed again and Sandy trotted off into the trees, presumably heading toward the glass and aluminum pay booth that stood like a relic of a departed alien civilization in the midst of the shacks and wigwams in which the Morning Star people were living. (Imagine if you can the scene when the clean-cut young men from Pacific Telephone arrived with their magic box, set it up right in the midst of the plaza through which naked girls sometimes stroll, and left it there as a monumental reminder that not even the farthest-out commune dare cut entirely the silver cord.)

Gottlieb instructed us to lay ourselves out in a position called the Corpse and count our breathing to fifty. When I finished and sat up, he was striding away toward the woods, a tall, dark, rather gaunt man, authoritative and charismatic, his full black beard giving him the look of a genuine prophet.

After we put on our clothes, the veteran bummed a cigarette from me, pinched out some of the tobacco at the end,

and mixed what he called a cocktail, using my cigarette and the remains of the marijuana cigarette he produced from his pocket. Milt, the bearded hippie, told me he had recently found yoga a great comfort while he was doing five days in the county jail. When I asked what he'd been arrested for, he said he'd been caught stealing one dollar and twenty-six cents' worth of food in a chain grocery.

"You really got to do this every day," the Mexican-American boy told me.

It wasn't until afterward that I became aware of how appropriate an introduction to Morning Star the yoga lesson had been, and in how many ways.

In the midst of all the journalistic commotion about the hippies that we endured during their heyday few of our experts noted that the roots of the hippie communes reach far back beyond the beats and other bohemians of our immediate past. Apart from certain details of style (drugs, primarily), the rural communes that began to spring up around the country around 1967 call strongly to mind the classic American utopias that flourished during the last century. Utopias were then, as they are now, a considerable movement; writing in 1870, John Humphrey Noyes, the historian of early American socialism, counted forty-seven colonies that had already come and gone, a list which runs from the Alphadelphia Phalanx to the Peace Union Settlement.

The great majority of these utopias, to be sure, consisted of farming colonies of pious German immigrants such as made up the Shakers and the Rappites, drawn together by a common regard for the virtues of hard work and the more radical forms of evangelical Christianity. Other roads to salvation, however, were sought by the colonists at Brook Farm in Massachusetts, the Oneida community in upstate New York, and New Harmony in Indiana. Parallels that bridge a century and a half are not hard to find between these older colonies and the new. The transcendental world view of Brook Farm,

the free love at Oneida, the constant dissonance between the ideal and the practical at New Harmony were all echoed to some extent at such latter-day utopias as Dr. Leary's Millbrook colony in upstate New York; Drop City, a village of geodesic domes built from junked automobile tops near Trinidad, Colorado; the Tolstoy colony near Davenport, Washington; and, of course, Morning Star.

Morning Star, in fact, lies within a few miles of the sites of three utopian communes that flourished in the latter part of the nineteenth century. (The longest-lived of these was the Brotherhood of the New Life, founded by the mystic and poet Thomas Lake Harris at Fountain Grove in 1875. It lasted as a utopia until 1892, and survived as a commercial vineyard for another forty years.) The guiding principles of Morning Star were not easy to classify, but if I were to make a stab at it, I should describe its operative principles as an amalgam of primitive Christianity, Zen, yoga, social nudism, and philosophical anarchism.

"Everybody's free to do his own thing," I was told by a red-bearded man I found sitting in the sun on the porch of what was called the Upper House. "Everybody's welcome here, everybody who wants to get away from that Great Society down there. Lou has only one strict rule: no campfires. I guess there are about sixty or seventy people here during the week, and twice that on weekends. If you want to work, you can. If you don't want to, you don't have to. As I say, everybody's free to do his own thing.

"This place wasn't ever organized. When Lou bought this land, the word got around the Haight-Ashbury that anybody could come and stay here. Why 'Morning Star'? Well, I guess it stands for something new and hopeful. A new day, you know."

The climate in Sonoma County is warm and easy in the summer, without a drop of rain falling from June to September. In the apple orchard and among the redwood groves that cover Lou's thirty-three acres, mobile youngsters from San

Francisco and New York and Vancouver and Louisville and Chicago had erected their pads, which ranged from conventional campers' tents and solid wooden huts to teepees and brushwood hogans. One resident, discovered living in a hollow redwood stump, was asked why he was chewing redwood bark. He replied that it brought him closer to nature. A permanent settler was building a substantial three-room house, and other, less ambitious cabins were going up. Many of the pads were decorated with the iconography of the 1960's — the nuclear disarmament symbol, LOVE, "god's eyes" of brightly colored yarn — but there were also a couple of life-sized crosses and a sign JESUS IS THE WAY.

In the winters it rains often in Sonoma and the nights become cold to the freezing point, but on a pleasant summer's day it wasn't hard to become convinced that this *was* the great good place, the New Jerusalem. The charm was so powerful that even a narc from the local district attorney's office confessed after his first visit that "I came back to the office and kidded the guys that I wouldn't be around much longer, that I was going to defect."

For the weekend tourists, there was at least one other clear attraction. Casual nudism was endemic, and on a Sunday ranchers in sombreros, the local gentry in golf caps, and high school boys in crew cuts stalked the hills and groves with their Polaroids. They didn't have to go far, for the whole point of going around without clothes is, of course, to celebrate the innocent glory of the flesh. For what it is worth, let me add that the nudism at Morning Star, as elsewhere, seemed generally antierotic in tendency, with none of the nuzzling, groping, and covert probing that goes on in every corner of the best-regulated beach.

Lou Gottlieb said of Morning Star, "We are running a pilot study in survival. The hippies are the first wave of the technological unemployed. Continuing the tradition of the intentional community — Brook Farm, Oneida, New Harmony —

the problem is to get a piece of land and see who it attracts. We are attempting a definition of a style of life."

The first time I'd seen Lou had been many years before at the San Francisco nightclub called the hungry i, where he had been plucking a double bass with the Gateway Singers and singing urban folk songs of his own composition. (One of these, as I recall, began *Oh, Doctor Freud, oh, Doctor Freud. / How I wish you had been differently employed. . . .*) Since then he had led another trio called the Limelitters while earning a Ph.D. in musicology at Berkeley. About 1965 he moved out to Morning Star and built a cabin for himself. As word spread that settlers were welcome, other people joined him, including some Diggers, members of the internal Salvation Army of the hippie movement, which existed to feed the hungry and clothe the naked. Although Morning Star was consequently identified as a Digger community, this was not strictly true. Some food grown at Morning Star went to the Haight-Ashbury by way of the Diggers, but the alliance was in the nature of things an exceedingly loose one.

When I walked up the hill into Morning Star for that first time, I was greeted by a Mozart sonata being played by a performer of near professional caliber. It was Lou, of course, practicing in his cabin, which is just large enough for a piano, a bed, some books, and Gottlieb himself. He practices six or seven hours a day, preparing, he says, for a concert debut when he turns fifty. Not wanting to disturb him, I walked on up to the Upper House, where I was shortly to be recruited for the yoga session, and it wasn't until well into the afternoon that I returned to the cabin.

The pure and literal anarchy of the daily regime at Morning Star was of a degree to outrage all of one's middle-class bias in favor of order and organization. The commune's style of life pushed permissiveness to its outer limits, with the guiding principle being the precise converse of the Protestant ethic of salvation-through-work or the dictum that he who doesn't work doesn't eat. Work does manage to get done — meals

are cooked, dishes are washed, the tomatoes, cabbages, pumpkins, and beans in the garden somehow get tended — but nobody has been assigned to any particular duty. People sleep, talk, smoke pot, talk, make love, talk, lie in the sun, talk, meditate, talk, sing, and talk.

In the afternoon, I joined six or eight other people, both hippie and straight, who had gathered outside Gottlieb's cabin to listen to him practice. I fell into conversation with a San Franciscan named Karl, whom I guessed to be in his seventies, a short, compact man wearing golden corduroys, who wore his hair and beard in the classic style of Buffalo Bill Cody and who told me that although he didn't live at Morning Star he came up on weekends to refresh his spirit. Among the others was a pleasant round-faced black boy and a spare, deeply tanned man whom I had already made note of several times because he had a habit of keeping his face, eyes closed, lifted directly into the sun.

There was also a pretty, college-age girl I shall call Karen, an outsider who had been much impressed by what she had seen. With her was a boy with what looked like a very new beard; they were each holding a flower and looking quite self-conscious. Karen burred on and on while Karl courteously and patiently fielded her observations that it was all so wonderful that it was hard to believe, that it was awfully pretty up here, that it must be a wonderful place to live, and on and on and on. Then the piano stopped with a burst of Beethoven, and Lou came out to join us.

Karen fell on him like a stooping falcon. "I just want to tell you how pretty that was. You're a good piano player."

"Oh, God," Lou said quietly, and retreated a step.

Karen forged on remorselessly. "It's such a beautiful place I wouldn't mind living here myself. Don't you love it?"

Lou, who is a highly articulate and even voluble man, disappeared silently. He returned with a paper sign that read: THIS BODY HAS ALREADY TALKED 'WAY TOO MUCH. He sat on the bench, pulled his legs up yoga fashion, lay the sign on his

lap, looked into the trees, and said nothing. (Lou himself doesn't practice nudism and was fully dressed in a dark sport shirt, slacks, white athletic socks, and an old pair of loafers.)

A black and white puppy approached. Undismayed, Karen exclaimed, "What a cute puppy! What's its name?"

"God," somebody on the other side of Gottlieb said.

"What a funny name for a puppy!" Karen cried. "Here, God! Come here, God!"

Looking nervously over his shoulder, the puppy departed at a fast trot. After a moment of blessed silence, Karen said, crestfallen, "Oh dear! I didn't even realize I was being put down."

She recovered in a moment, however, and dashed away in high spirits to show a newly arrived friend around Morning Star. Looking after her, Lou said mildly, "And to think that's exactly the sort of girl I used to run around after."

He closed his eyes and folded his hands in an attitude of meditation. I found a comfortable place on the deck and dozed in the warm sun with my back against the cabin. The others did likewise or wandered away. It was very pleasant.

Suddenly a car erupted on the narrow dirt road that came up from the parking lot, and ground to a dusty halt a few feet from me. A deputy sheriff was at the wheel, a young, beefy man wearing a spanking fresh khaki uniform. He put his head out the window — dark glasses, square teeth, carefully combed wavy yellow hair — and said, "Hi, Lou."

"Hello," Gottlieb said courteously.

"Can we have a word with you?"

"Of course."

The deputy ground the car up the gravel a few extra feet toward the cabin and got out with his passenger. The second man was older, a graying crew cut type wearing a tails-out sport shirt and sharply pressed slacks. Under the tail of his shirt protruded the bottom of a well-worn pistol holster woven of leather strips.

"I wonder if we could talk privately," the uniformed deputy said.

"Certainly," Lou answered.

I got up reluctantly and walked down to the Lower House.

A tall, well-made girl who appeared to be wearing nothing except a brown T-shirt was strumming a guitar and singing to an audience of a dozen or so people in the Lower House. Some of them were sitting on a ratty sofa and a couple of overstuffed chairs. On a mattress on the floor sat a young fellow wearing a marine private's dress tunic and blue jeans. A thin girl in a granny dress was curled up on the other mattress. A cotton spread had been thrown over her and a half-eaten apple lay near her mouth. Because she looked withdrawn and glassy-eyed, I assumed she was on an acid trip, but when I looked closer she seemed sick and unhappy. Out in the kitchen several people were working on dinner.

The tall girl stopped singing, and as she put aside her guitar and stood up, it became triumphantly apparent that she *wasn't* wearing anything but the T-shirt, for the shirt barely covered her navel, and below its hem she displayed a magnificent bush of auburn hair. She walked over to me and asked if I had a spare cigarette. I gave her one, and while I was lighting it with a nervous hand I tried to think of some social remark that was appropriate to the occasion. Nothing at all usable suggested itself. The girl waited a little, as if she was surprised I had nothing to say for myself, and then turned and left.

After a while I went to the well, which occupies a strategic position between the Upper House, the Lower House, and Gottlieb's cabin. I found Milt, my bearded companion at the yoga lesson, sitting on the edge of the well and asked him if he knew what was on the minds of the deputies, who were still talking earnestly to Gottlieb, who looked completely undisturbed.

"Somebody in a sheriff's car comes up here about twice a

week," Milt said. "Usually it's about illegal campfires or underage runaways or sanitation." (I found out later that county officials had also been interested in a case of infectious hepatitis and a couple of cases of gonorrhea reported from Morning Star.)

Milt grinned cheerfully and went on, "The cops aren't really very high on my list of worries. Not having a warm place to sleep comes first. Then comes going hungry. Cops are third."

I asked if the sheriff had ever made any trouble about drugs.

"Not yet," he said, "but we don't have any guarantee about the future. I make sure I'm never carrying any pot on me. I do my best to smoke only other people's pot. It's pretty hard for them to bust you just for smoking. Usually they have to prove possession."

So far as I could tell, although pot was being smoked freely, there wasn't any visible evidence of LSD being used, if you excepted the thin girl on the mattress in the Lower House. One boy whom I asked about drugs said, "Oh, hell, who wants to get on acid and go around all stinking with sweat?"

Karl, the elderly man with flowing gray hair, came up to the well to say goodbye. He was going back to the city, he said, to take the sick girl to the hospital. "I don't know if you noticed, but her face was all swollen up," he said. "She's been on speed. It rots out the teeth and she's a pretty sick girl." We shook hands and he walked across the little plaza to his camper truck. The sick girl was already lying on a bunk in the back. A boy got in to keep her company and shut the door. Karl got behind the wheel and began to turn his truck around.

The deputies had in the meantime gone back to Santa Rosa, and a number of people had drifted back toward Lou's cabin. Milt, who had taken off his clothes, which he was holding in one hand, was telling an inquisitive tourist that he had

gone to Hebrew school for six years. Lou had resumed his position of meditation.

I walked through the orchard and back through the redwoods. As I came out of the woods, I stepped almost into the middle of a quiet group of two bearded men and two girls who were sitting in the shade. None of them was wearing clothes, although the men had on straw hats. As I looked back at them, it struck me that they had fallen almost precisely into the easy postures of the picnic group in Manet's *Le Déjeuner sur l'Herbe*.

Lou was looking somewhat more convivial when I returned to his cabin. A disciple was sitting at his feet, a muscular man in shorts and sandals with long reddish hair and a Jesus beard, rocking back and forth on his heels, staring unblinkingly at Gottlieb and, when I stopped, at me. I thanked Lou for his hospitality. He invited me to come back, and I said I would.

As it turned out, before I went back to Morning Star the community had suffered an act of violence that demonstrated the impossibility of a utopia's cutting itself off entirely from the dominant pressures of the great world outside. Furthermore, an invasion by the assembled forces of official society had been set into motion.

There had been a nighttime fight at Morning Star between blacks and whites, apparently over a white girl. After a scuffle, some of the blacks had retrieved guns that had been hidden in the bushes and had fired several shots. Nobody had been hit, but one of the blacks, angry and frightened, had called the cops. The anger of the blacks was understandable, for it wasn't the first incident of the sort. Earlier in the summer a crowd of Gypsy Jokers — an outlaw motorcycle gang — had violently dispossessed some black residents from their mattresses and sleeping bags.

Although the county authorities seemed to have endured Morning Star with quite remarkable forbearance up to this

point, the shooting crystallized local sentiment hostile to Gottlieb. It is not, I think, irrelevant to note that the most emotional arguments were directed against "nudity visible from the highway." (Ah, America!)

The district attorney announced his intention of closing the place down, and a judge enjoined Gottlieb and a hundred John Does from running an organized camp, from parading their nudity, from building campfires, and from letting the public onto the property. A safari of officials tramped up the hill from the parking lot: the sheriff and eight deputies, a half dozen building inspectors, FBI agents, a county supervisor, the chief probation officer, a municipal court judge, and even border patrolmen looking for Canadians.

As it happened, I had talked to two of the Canadians on the day after the gunplay. I found them lying out in the orchard, sunning themselves in the buff. "When we get back to Canada we're going to start a place like this ourselves," one boy, from British Columbia, told me. When I asked what the trouble was with Morning Star, the other, a boy from Montreal who'd been living at the commune since early spring, said, "Before the summer everything was different. Everybody turned out for yoga, everybody worked in the vegetable fields, everybody was on the macrobiotic diet — you know, brown rice and stuff like that. Then these outsiders moved into the Upper House and began playing the record player loud and drinking and eating meat."

He bummed a cigarette from me and lay back in the sun for a few minutes. Then he sat up and asked, "Say, have you ever heard of a place called Tolstoy?"

I said I'd heard of it but that was all.

"It's a groovy place. They don't let *everybody* in — just people who really believe in it. They've got some organization there. Everybody knows what he's supposed to do."

I said it sounded somewhat different from Morning Star.

"It is," he said. "It sure is." He sounded wistful.

When I walked back to the center of the community, a

series of arpeggios from the cabin told me that Lou was in residence. A good-looking white girl and the round-faced black boy were sitting on the bench outside. I thought of stopping and saying hello to Gottlieb, but I didn't want to interrupt his practicing and, besides that, I felt depressed by what had been happening to Morning Star.

My depression turned out to be unfortunately justified by what happened next. After some legal backing-and-filling, the judge who had issued the injunction gave Lou four days to bring Morning Star up to the standards of an organized camp as defined by the laws of the state. At the end of the four days he found Gottlieb in contempt of court and fined him five hundred dollars, with an additional five hundred to be levied for every day that any guests were found on his property.

The next day a posse of deputies arrived and pointed out to Lou that the fourteen young people who insisted on staying would cost him another five hundred dollars. Lou asked his friends to leave. His friends declined. Lou asked the deputies to remove his friends. The deputies declined. Lou asked what he should do. The deputies suggested that he make a citizen's arrest. Reluctantly, Lou went from one guest to the next, asking each one to leave and, when he wouldn't, arresting him for trespass. Then the deputies put the hippies in their cars and carted them off to the county jail in Santa Rosa.

"It's a damn sorry day when the laws of the state force a man to arrest his brothers and sisters in order to avoid paying a fine," Lou said after they had gone.

A couple of days later, hearing that Lou was visiting each one of the three hundred ninety-six citizens who had signed a petition that had helped bring on the injunction ("I'm going to try to look into their hearts," he said) I dialed the number of the phone booth near the well. A long time went by, there was some electronic clicking, and then a recorded female voice told me that the number was no longer in service.

Lou's troubles continued. It was practically impossible to keep kids out of Morning Star if they were determined to live

there, and every once in a while the deputies would descend on the place and Lou would be hit with another fine. He is not a poor man — a couple of years ago he played the role of a guru in a movie with Peter Sellers and he has other sources of income — but after he had paid out several thousands in fines (fifteen thousand dollars is the figure that sticks in my mind), he announced that he had had enough, and appeared in court to deed his land to God. (“God has revealed the meaning of original sin to be the exclusive ownership of land,” he argued in a memorandum to the court.)

Lou continues to live at Morning Star, even though it now belongs to the Almighty, and continues to practice for his debut as a concert pianist on his fiftieth birthday. The last time I drove past Morning Star on my way somewhere else, I noticed there weren’t any automobiles in the parking lot at all, but I hear that a number of the kids have hung on regardless of who owns the land.

29. *Sympathy for the Devil*

Just as it had started in California, so it ended in California.

For half a year after the gathering at Woodstock in the summer of 1969, it was easy and comforting to believe that the counter culture of the kids had shown itself to be a real and enduring thing. It had been easy because *Time* and *Newsweek* and *Life* and the *New Yorker* had all assured us, each in its own manner, that Woodstock had been a beautiful thing. Eros had triumphed.

Then came the disaster at Altamont. Altamont is a drag

strip which, significantly or not, is just a few miles up the road from the Santa Rita prison farm. Most of the blame for what happened there surely belongs to the Rolling Stones and their manager, Sam Cutler, who evidently looked on this free concert in a California valley as a capital gimmick for promoting the Stones and their star, Mick Jagger. Unaccountably, Mr. Cutler apparently promised the Hell's Angels five hundred dollars worth of beer if they would keep the peace.

Yet the sadness of the story of Altamont is not merely that the Hell's Angels went berserk, severely stomping a number of spectators and in the end killing a young black man, but that the so-called Woodstock Nation turned out to be an unhappy fraud.

The first band to play, a little after noon, was called Santana. Things began going bad during Santana's first set. As Sol Stern, who was there, reported, "To the right of the stage, about twenty rows back, a repulsively fat man, a huge circus freak, stood naked, his enormous belly hanging down in ripples which almost obscured his tiny penis. . . . A fight broke out around the grotesque fat man. . . . Then three Hell's Angels, carrying five-foot pool cues, crossed the stage, moving from left to right, divined the location of the scuffle, and dove in, feet first, as if into a swimming pool. . . . Two Angels stood over the fallen fat figure, pounding down with the pool cues, hard, well-aimed blows with both hands coming down over their head, as if they were beating the dust from an old mattress. A man rushed to the assistance of the figure on the ground, but he went under quickly in a hail of stomping and kicking Angels. The lesson took with the crowd, and no one tried to be a hero again."

The Jefferson Airplane came on after the Angels had beaten and stomped several other people. When the Airplane's male vocalist tried to pull the Angels off a black man they were beating on stage, he was knocked unconscious.

The group called Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young came on about four o'clock. More people were beaten while this

combo did its set. The musicians then got into their rented helicopter and left.

The audience was kept waiting until darkness set in. Of the Angels, Stern wrote, "We hated them, hated them and envied them all at the same time. For all of their brutality and ugliness they had a definition of themselves and their purpose that showed us up. We had all talked about a countercommunity for years — and now, with that community massed in one place, we couldn't relate to anything. In their primitive way, and without talking much about it, the Angels were so together that less than a hundred of them were able to take over and intimidate a crowd of close to a half million people."

At about seven, the Rolling Stones themselves came on, their leader, the epicene Mick Jagger, prancing around the stage in a black and orange cape. Nothing serious happened during the first three numbers. The fourth song was called "Sympathy for the Devil." Something distracting was going on just over the edge of the four-foot-high stage while Jagger sang. He stopped and started again. People tried to pass a body up on stage. Jagger looked down and said, "Hey, we need a doctor here." The Stones went on with their music and Jagger finished his song.

The Angels had killed an eighteen-year-old black named Meredith Hunter. He had been stabbed five times in the back and once below the left ear. Witnesses to the murder agreed that Hunter had flourished a gun.

Before the disaster at Altamont was over, three other people were dead — two run over by cars and one drowned. About a hundred people were reported to have been beaten, stomped, or roughed up by the Angels. Several times that number had brought disaster on themselves and had suffered bad acid trips.

Thanatos was in command, after all.

Six. God and Man

That scum which the westward moving wave of emigration carries on its crest is here stopped, because it can go no farther.

— Lord Bryce

[Los Angeles is] a small town, inhabited by Spaniards, called the town of the Angels. The houses have flat roofs, covered with bituminous pitch, brought from a place within four miles of the town, where this article boils up from the earth.

— James Ohio Pattie, 1828

California is to most Eastern people still a land of big beets and pumpkins, of rough miners, of pistols, bowie knives, abundant fruit, queer wines, high prices — full of discomfort and abounding in dangers to the peaceful traveller.

— Charles Nordoff, 1872

. . . the empty sun and the incessant rains . . . the dry mountains and the vast void of Pacific space . . . the hypnotic rhythms of day and night revolve with unblurred uniformity . . . the surf that seems to roll up the beach with a purposeless expressionless beat after the moody assaults of the Atlantic.

— Edmund Wilson

How many good men we have produced in California and what bad history they have succeeded in making.

— Gertrude Atherton

California is infested with broken men who came looking for gold and never found it; Hollywood, as Nathanael West knew, is where the losers go to die, and California, the graveyard of western man.

— Dennis Hale and Jonathan Eisen

Thus here again, in the case of the Roman Empire, a steady decline of civilization is not to be traced to physical degeneration, or to any abasement of blood in the higher races due to slavery, or to political and economic conditions, but rather to a changed attitude of men's minds.

— Rostovtzeff

30. *Life Among the Presbyterians*

My life among the Presbyterians has been a curious one. I long ago abandoned all formal ties with that church (or any other), but when we moved to California my father was a professor and then a dean at the seminary near San Francisco, and Nikki and I were sometimes drawn into its periphery.

The seminary was a rather austere institution in those days, its tone set by elderly gentlemen in dark suits who gave the impression that at least once a week they conferred on easy terms with the Almighty. The social atmosphere was appropriately Calvinist: no liquor, no cigarettes, and no lusting after one's neighbor's wife. Because my father smoked a pipe and was known to take an occasional glass of wine, he was regarded as occupying a middle ground between the seminary Establishment and the Young Turks who were beginning to join the faculty.

The revolution at the seminary came about with the retirement as president of Jesse Hays Baird and with the installation of Theodore Gill, a witty, articulate, and worldly man in his forties who came to the seminary from the editorship of the *Christian Century*, that scourge of ecclesiastical and political conservatism. The elderly gentlemen in dark suits retired one by one and the faculty offices became home to younger men whose personal styles ran to tweed jackets and loafers, who smoked and drank and even danced, and who appeared to be more committed to the cause of peace and civil rights than to the Westminster Confession.

The first time Nikki and I were invited to dinner at a seminary home it was after the revolution, but we weren't quite

sure what to expect. Before leaving for the party we discussed whether or not we should have a couple of stiff belts to help us through the evening, but, fortunately as it turned out, we decided to play it straight. I say fortunately because the professor of pastoral psychology pressed large martinis upon us as soon as we entered his door and saw to it that our glasses did not run dry. Nor was this liberality a concession to our worldly and unchurched tastes. Not only the professor of pastoral psychology himself but also the other guests, who included the professor of systematic theology and the professor of homilectics and their wives, drank right along with us, giving every sign of being hardened in dissipation. I was pleased but a little shaken, as if Jesse Hays Baird had been apprehended in drag.

At table, our host delivered a brief and appropriate grace, giving thanks for the fellowship we were enjoying. Then he opened the wine and filled our glasses. The wine was good and the dinner was first-rate. Afterward, we adjourned to the living room for coffee and brandy.

I suppose the brandy had something to do with it, for I don't usually sing at dinner parties, but sometime in the latter part of the evening I found myself leading the professors in a song I picked up somewhere in my travels. Sung to the tune of the *Battle Hymn of the Republic*, it goes like this:

*Lloyd George knows my fa-ather,
 Father knows Lloyd George.
 Lloyd George knows my fa-ather,
 Father knows Lloyd George.
 Lloyd George knows my fa-ather,
 Father knows Lloyd George. . . .*

ad infinitum.

The singing was apparently a memorable success, for every once in a while I will be approached at a social gathering by a jovial Presbyterian, who will be humming the familiar tune.

I remain on easy terms with the seminary. The new president is a man of about my age with a good-looking blond wife. He is the author of a slender book titled *Drinking: A Christian Position*. He appears to be generally in favor of the institution. The last time I had a drink with the professor of pastoral psychology I asked him what *his* current book was about. He said it was about sex, and as the conversation went on it became apparent that he was in favor of that institution also.

31. *Accepting the Unacceptable*

Mention California to a true Easterner — I mean one who in spirit carries a bear rifle and halazone tablets whenever he ventures west of the Delaware Water Gap — and the odds are that he'll give two knee jerks. The first knee jerk is set off by hippies and rioting students and the second is set off by queer religions.

Of course he's right. California has indeed been the seed-bed for campus rebellion and it has indeed been the New Jerusalem for God only knows how many jerrybuilt religious sects, from Sister Aimee's daft Church of the Foursquare Gospel to L. Ron Hubbard's Scientology.*

* Scientology surfaced just the other day, complete with an estimated income of three million dollars a week and a Sea Organization commanding a fleet of five ships. On the five-thousand-ton *Apollo*, Hubbard himself, the former pope of Dianetics, was found dressed in a commodore's uniform. According to Commodore Hubbard, "The Sea Org is the most valuable and dedicated group of beings on this planet and is the spearhead of a new and greater civilization. Its purpose is far beyond that of any other group in the history of mankind."

The true and classic California religious sect is a yeasty mixture of inspiration, charisma, improvisation, avarice and a modicum of crookedness. Beyond this, the sects have been California phenomena of the purest water, by-passing all established forms and institutions and bringing the believer into direct contact with God, Karma, or Ultimate Truth. The only limits have been those of the human imagination. In California, our Pilgrim Fathers have been men like Robert G. Le-Tourneau, the Henry Ford of earthmoving machinery, who trod the sawdust trail at a revival in Stockton in 1920. "I shovel in, and the Lord shovels out, only He uses a bigger shovel," the convert declared in later years.

The conventional churches have not been unaffected by the general climate of radical Protestantism in spiritual matters and, although the old-line denominations have been stirring throughout the country, it is in California that we find the qualities of imagination and improvisation most highly developed. A further current of change has been making itself apparent with the emergence of church leaders as focal points of resistance against the incursions of the parafascist state. While no Bonnhoeffers or Niebuhrs have yet emerged, there are some worthy candidates, including, as we have noted, Kilmer Myers, the Episcopal bishop.

Although Bishop Myers is not by any means the only clergyman to have spoken out against the growing parafascist pattern of Mr. Reagan's administration, the resistance of the clergy, particularly among its younger members, has often taken a collateral direction involving their personal styles of life and a refusal to play the role that is expected of them. Among these rebels is Ted McIlvenna, a stockily built young man with yellow hair, a Methodist who gave up a suburban pastorate to become involved in the affairs of San Francisco's inner city. His base of action is the Glide Church and the Glide Foundation, a social action organization that has been responsible for a certain incidence of hypertension among conservative churchmen, who find it hard to countenance the

foundation's sponsoring a Halloween ball for drag queens or a club for teen-age male prostitutes.

"The homosexuals came to us through the young adults program for people from high school age to thirty or thirty-five," Mr. McIlvenna told me. "They presented us with something we had to deal with.

"I have a *yeh-yeh-yeh* theology. The only thing the church has to say is *Yes* to man. *Yes*, you're accepted even if you're unacceptable. Other people can say other things to men. But this is the key to the kingdom: we say *Yes* to people.

"The relevance of Christianity is that it is a world-transforming religion with a world view, a *Weltanschauung*. Forgiveness is continuous and doesn't depend on our state of righteousness. We want to deal with our human situation as it is.

"Humanitarianism doesn't carry with it that demand, that authority. We're much more conscious of history, of the past and the present. The church is the enculturated agent in American society.

"We have to learn to use what other people use — we have to share. We test the relevance of historic Christianity through perceptions. God speaks to us through people. I'm operational. I'm interested in what's going on. I'm always trying to find alternatives. At Glide we're engaged in humanizing emerging life styles to try to find alternative ways to manage ourselves."

I first became aware of Glide several years ago when I gave up teaching at San Quentin in favor of teaching a school, also for adults, on the western, or uptown, edge of the San Francisco Tenderloin. Glide is housed in a beige stucco building of Spanish colonial inspiration on the eastern, or downtown, edge. Between us was an area about six blocks long by four blocks wide that contains bars, cheap hotels, laundries, secondhand magazine shops, many other perfectly respectable small businesses, and the homosexual's hunting ground known as the Meat Rack. (The Tenderloin must not be con-

fused with Skid Row, the wino's haven around Third and Howard, nor with the black ghettos of the Fillmore and Hunter's Point.) I used to explore the Tenderloin on my way to school. It is not particularly sinister by day — just drab; but at night its bars and eating places entertain more than their quota of whores, pimps, junkies, motorcycle riders, faggots, and other assorted types who are not generally invited into polite society.

When in the mid-1960's Glide burst upon the consciousness of the public, it was in the somewhat undignified context of having had a hand in a public dance for homosexuals, complete with drag queens and the police vice squad. When I decided to drop around and see what was going on at Glide, I remembered reports about some of its other activities: a coffeehouse called the Precarious Vision, a night ministry on the Tenderloin streets, a clearinghouse for newcomers to the city, a network of citizens on twenty-four-hour alert for reports of police brutality, and an interest in getting a fair shake for conscientious objectors. I also had found out that a substantial part of its congregation had left in dismay at these purported scandals.

Ted McIlvenna isn't the only minister at Glide, but he happened to be the one I talked to first, both in his office, whose shelves carried homosexual literature, and in the Flower Children's Art Bag, which turned out to be a show of hippie painting and sculpture in the church hall. In talking to him, I soon became aware that two of the key words in his vocabulary were "penetration" and "involvement," and that he saw his mission, both as a clergyman and as a citizen, as that of coming to grips with the problems that are created by the conditions of life in a large city. The Tenderloin is a long way from his suburban church. As he described one aspect of his penetration of the Tenderloin, "I forced myself to go where I was scared to go. Once I was there, I usually found myself caught up in the action."

Mr. McIlvenna's concern for the problems of what he calls

the "contemporary generation" has more than once singled him out from the other Glide ministers (there are four of them) as a leader in crusades in sexual matters that have struck unfriendly critics as unbecoming, bizarre, and hardly the business of a Christian minister. Yet San Francisco has a substantial homosexual population (ten per cent of the population, according to an estimate nobody has seriously challenged); the problems clearly existed, and they were "something we had to deal with." Nevertheless, it was not a particular surprise when Glide's board of trustees expressed consternation on hearing that Mr. McIlvenna had, on their behalf, become involved with homosexuals. The board — which includes the resident Methodist bishop, two other clergymen, an insurance man, a stationer, a professor of embryology, and a judge — was thereupon invited to have dinner with some representatives of the homosexual community. The affair, surprisingly, went off well, and Mr. McIlvenna's work proceeded.

The police were harder to convince. When Mr. McIlvenna and the other Glide ministers, joined by representatives of some other Protestant denominations, presented themselves at headquarters to discuss the proposed drag-queen's dance, they were received with pastoral lectures on the theme that the police had been given a mandate to enforce what they described as "God's law" and that the clergymen had better leave such matters alone. In spite of this opposition, the dance was held. Four persons — a woman doorman and three lawyers — were arrested for interfering with police, but later they were acquitted on a technicality.

The problems of sexual behavior hold a firm place on Glide's agenda of Christian causes. During the past two years Mr. McIlvenna has been responsible for the advanced sex education of some six thousand men and women — physicians, teachers, counselors, clergymen — by means of movies, photographs and slides of the sex act in its various permutations and combinations. "Basically we have helped them find out

what people do and how they feel about it rather than what they *should* do," Mr. McIlvenna explained.

On the day I met him, Mr. McIlvenna, accompanied by his colleague A. Cecil Williams, was getting ready for a trip to the Kinsey Institute to engage in some research there. Before he left, however, Mr. Williams, who is black, suggested that I come along with him on a visit he was going to pay in the black ghetto. It had been a week of summer rioting throughout the country, and as we drove toward the Fillmore district in his VW, Mr. Williams told me that he'd had a total of ten hours of sleep during the week, the rest of his time having been spent on the street, trying to keep things cool in San Francisco.

We parked near Fillmore Street, and Mr. Williams ushered me into an establishment called the Black Free Store and introduced me to Roy Ballard, a slender, intense young man who was wearing a black beret, a black raincoat and beads.

Mr. Ballard led me down to the basement, where, in a dark corner, he turned and said, "All these people are fed up with the old world. We all have to stop living a lie and start living the truth.

"Last Wednesday night," he went on, "five hundred kids got together on the street outside the Free Store. [By "kids" he meant young men, mainly angry.] There were forty cops down the street getting ready to come up the sidewalks. We talked most of the kids into going home before the cops started moving. About a hundred and fifty kids came in here. The man across the street sent over coffee and doughnuts. Just when everything was quiet, the cops broke open the door and fifteen of them came in. They pushed some people around before they left.

"The next day I went to talk to the chief."

I asked what he had said to the chief.

"I told him if it happens again, somebody's going to die. You know, this world's coming to a complete end."

Somebody put a can of beer into my hand, and Mr. Ballard

went on talking as we peered at each other in the unlighted basement, still sour with the smell of decades of neglect. The idea for the store, he told me, had come from the hippies, who had opened a free store in the Haight-Ashbury to which people had donated goods for other people to take. In both stores, the operative word was *free*. Anybody could come in and help themselves to anything at any time — a coat, a frying pan, a chair, a dress, a stove, a TV set. The Black Free Store was usually open twenty-four hours a day, but even if it happened to be shut, at least twenty people in the ghetto had keys and could open it up for an urgent request. I asked Mr. Ballard if he didn't have trouble with people taking advantage of this policy.

"There used to be eight people who took our stuff to sell," he said. "There's still five of them left. I keep working on them. I keep telling them — look, you're taking things away from others. This place is helping you. It's keeping you out of jail."

Mr. Ballard struck a light for his cigarette, illuminating his intent, unsmiling face. "What we're trying to do is to bring about a closeness like we had down South. The deeper you go down South, the closer the people are, the more they help each other. The old tradition goes on even up here. That's what we're doing. This store is more than just a place to get things free."

On the way back downtown, Mr. Williams told me that the Black Free Store doesn't limit itself to giving things away. Every Saturday it had been sponsoring a happening in a park close to the main black housing project. Halves of beef were barbecued, bands played, and, as Mr. Williams put it, "Life is joyous, life is hopeful, life is good."

Just a week or so before, he went on, they had found that of one hundred twenty children they were working with, only twenty-seven had ever been outside of the ghetto. The Glide Foundation had been persuaded to contribute six hundred dollars for a truck. "We loaded it up with everybody who

wanted to go," Mr. Williams recalled. "There were the kids' mothers, prostitutes, dope pushers, everybody. 'If you don't have any other place to go, come here,' we said. Well, they drove toward Yosemite and camped on some property in Mariposa. They had a wonderful time. Everything went well."

I remarked that San Francisco's reputation for charm and tolerance had largely masked the fact that many of her black people might as well be living in Harlem or Washington, D.C., so far as their prospects in life went. "We're always covering up," Mr. Williams said. "There's a sophistication here, a smugness that keeps us from seeing things as they are."

For Cecil Williams, seeing things as they are has involved not only acting as a leader in the black community's assault on Whitey, but also in ministering to a congregation that is mainly white. I went to hear him on a Sunday when, after a particularly destructive and obscene race riot in the East, Mr. Williams had announced that he would speak on "Race, Riots, and Reconciliation." (The pulpit at Glide, incidentally, is not always occupied by an ordained minister. Among the others has been Saul Alinsky, the organizer of the urban poor, who is a layman, a Jew, and a fierce enemy of conventional thinking.)

Mr. Williams's Sunday service began conventionally enough with a hymn by John Greenleaf Whittier ("Love shall tread out the baleful fire of anger. . . .") but this was followed by a rock band called Mother Earth, whose leader alternated, Bob Dylan style, between playing a harmonica and singing a blues whose refrain went "Like a stranger in my own home town." Mr. Williams, obviously a little cross, had to cut them off when they ran over their time. Afterward, he told me they had been supposed to play a couple of gospel hymns, but I told him I'd sort of liked the blues anyway.

Because the Tenderloin runs suddenly into the downtown hotel district, the Sunday congregation contained many tour-

ists, some of whom, I'm sure, never quite recovered from their innocent exposure to Glide. There were fewer blacks than I'd expected, all of them well groomed, prosperous-looking people. There were, however, a surprising number of young whites of vaguely hip persuasion, in shirt-sleeves or sacklike dresses and with abundant hair.

Mr. Williams is a preacher in the classic mold, a pointer of index fingers, a kneader of the air, a constructor of rolling rhetorical periods. His sermon was centered on blackness, his personal blackness as well as the blackness of the ghetto. He had, he told us, tried skin bleaches, tried hot combs to straighten his hair, and had tried to learn to talk as if he were white. "Then," he said, "in 1955 for the first time I started to live with my blackness instead of trying to be a white man." He leaned forward and looked into our faces as he told us that there were still members of his congregation who were unwilling to accept him as their pastor. Then he stood back and said easily, smiling, "If they can't accept people with *long* hair, how can they accept me?"

Mr. Williams quoted Shakespeare, Langston Hughes, and a dozen other assorted writers as he drove us to his main point, the urgent need to counter the causes of the riots with a new spirit within the church as well as outside. "The young black people of the ghetto won't come back until the church embraces *shalom*," he said. "*Shalom*: the peace that passeth understanding. *Shalom*: to receive all men in their fullest joy and sorrow."

I wondered myself if *shalom* could overcome the collective hatred that occupies so much of our emotional life in California, or if *shalom* was about as relevant as the hippie girl's scribbled "love."

32. *Fire and Aire, Water and Earth*

Disasters of the spirit have their analogs in disasters of the land. We are all creatures of the physical world, just as we are of our social and emotional worlds, which overlap and are intertwined in subtle and powerful ways. A dislocation in one sphere is the cause of dislocations in the others. In her perceptive and underpraised book, *Slouching Toward Bethlehem*, Joan Didion has reminded us of this truth in her account of how, when the Santa Ana blew for fourteen days in 1957, there was a great welling up of violence in Los Angeles.

The Santa Ana is a dust-bearing wind that blows onto Southern California out of the furnace of the Mojave Desert to the northeast. It began to blow on November 21. A forest fire in the San Gabriel mountains went out of control. In the city, the wind blew at hurricane force. Oil derricks fell. Six people were killed in automobile accidents on November 24. On the 26th, a lawyer killed his wife, their two sons, and himself. The next day, a young divorced woman was killed and thrown from a moving car. On December 1, four people died violently.

"Los Angeles weather is the weather of catastrophe," Miss Didion wrote, "and, just as the reliably long and bitter winters of New England determine the way life is lived there, so the violence and unpredictability of the Santa Ana affect the entire quality of life in Los Angeles, accentuate its impermanence, its unreliability. The wind shows us how close to the edge we are."

Raymond Chandler, that supreme expert in the personality of Los Angeles, wrote in one of his novels, "It was one of those hot Santa Anas that come down through the mountain passes and curl your hair and make your nerves jump and your skin itch. On nights like that every booze party ends in a fight. Meek little wives feel the edge of the carving knife and study their husbands' necks. Anything can happen."

To which I would add that when they become violent, the physical circumstances of life in California are harder for us to bear than his winter blizzards are to the New Hampshire-man. Is this not said to be the land of mild blue skies and green valleys, of the ocean called Pacific and pleasant vineyards? Every fall, when the first great storm rolls in after a summer without rain, throws fishing boats on the rocks, tears the roofs from our houses, and sends great trees across our roads, we are shocked and dislocated in our inner beings even though it was like this the year before and the year before and the year before.

Earth, water, air, and fire, said the ancients. Chemists to the contrary, earth, water, air, and fire remain our elements. If the Santa Ana is a disaster of the air, we are frequently reminded that our earth, water, and fire are even more treacherous. Like the peasants on the slope of Vesuvius, as we go about our business we are obliged in the cause of sanity to suppress the knowledge that we live on a land of such volatility that it may any day tear itself apart as it has in the past and tear us apart with it. As Harold Gilliam, who is one of the most dedicated observers of the California land, wrote recently of our habitual fantasies of security from earthquakes, "Probably never before in history has a literate population indulged in such a potentially catastrophic fantasy of self-deception."

As for fire, we tremble in ecstasies of foreboding on two accounts. First there is the archetypal image of our cities burning to the ground, an image whose strength is nourished by the destruction of San Francisco in 1906, by Nathanael

West's imagined destruction of Los Angeles, and by the actual destruction of that enclave of Los Angeles that is known as Watts. Second there are the fires that every summer wipe out hundreds of thousands of acres of our forests.

But of all the assaults that the physical world inflicts upon us Californians, none is so frequent and experienced by so many people as our rains, which are always immoderate but which in some years are more immoderate than in others. Southern California had not seen another winter like that of 1968-1969 in this century. On January eighteenth, a storm dropped 6.5 inches of water on Los Angeles. Five days later, a second storm brought another seven inches. At Lake Arrowhead, 37.5 inches fell. (Thirty-seven-point-five inches!)

Eighty-seven people died. Twelve were buried alive in mud. Fifty-two died on the storm-whipped highways. Four crashed in planes. Seventeen drowned. Two died of heart attacks.

Nine thousand people left their homes. In Carpinteria, Montecito, and Solvang, people sat on their roofs, waiting for the helicopters. Men are always eager to lend a hand to disaster, and hundreds of families suffered for the avarice of the builders whose bulldozers had recklessly torn away the hills. Houses toppled or slid down the slopes, gouging out their own roadways as they went. (There are few sights more obscene than a house torn apart after its footings have given away.) A man in Highland Park heard a noise that he thought was thunder. Then, he said, "I looked out our window and there was this house in the middle of the street." He pulled a woman out of the house, but it wasn't until hours later that somebody discovered that two small boys had suffocated in the mud.

A popular song on the radio that winter was a mock-calypto that went:

*Day after day
More people come to L.A.*

*Please won't you tell everybody
The whole place is slipping away.*

As I write, it has been raining for sixteen days. Houses have been sliding down hills, one after the other. Nobody will write insurance against either the financial or the psychic loss. The house is simply gone.

As John Donne preached in the sermon published as his twentieth: "Fire and Aire, Water and Earth, are not the Elements of man; inward decay, and outward violence, bodily pain, and sorrow of heart may be rather styled his Elements; and though he be destroyed by these, yet he consists of nothing but these."

33. *Over the Wall and Away*

Things were running about a half hour late on a Sunday morning in Los Angeles when Dan Delaney, a former Catholic priest who used to minister to a suburban parish said, "All right, folks, let's get going." Delaney is a well-built man in his middle thirties with a reddish-brown beard. He was wearing slacks, a pumpkin-colored turtleneck shirt, sandals, a peace symbol pendant, and a red button that advocated a boycott of table grapes.

After somebody turned off Simon and Garfunkel on the PA system, three guitar players — two former priests and a former nun — struck chords on their instruments as thirty or forty of us gathered around the altar, a table whose front was covered by a homemade altar cloth bearing the stylized image of a flower and the words CELEBRATION OF LIFE. Behind the altar and elsewhere in the hall hung banners saying LET'S

REALLY BE FREE and JOY and LOVE and NOW NOW NOW LIFE
and CONSCIENCE MAKES US CARE.

The guitarists led us as we sang:

*To be alive and feelin' free,
And to have everyone in our family
To be alive in ev'ry way!
Oh, how great it is
To be alive!*

Unlike the movement called the underground church, whose adherents, like the early Christians, assembled privately in homes, the free liturgy was held in a public hall and was open to anybody who walked in. As Dan explained the difference to me, "The underground church is disappearing — there isn't anything to be underground *about* anymore. The free church is what's happening."

Advertised mainly by word of mouth, the free liturgies seem to have attracted mainly former priests, former nuns, and former seminarians. One of the former seminarians was black. As we stood in a semi-circle, on my left was Chris Delaney, who a year ago had been a sister of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and was now seven months pregnant, and on my other side was a fallen-away priest from French Canada, a handsome, gray-haired, witty man. His wife was with him. With the exception of these two and myself, nobody looked over thirty-five.

After the first song, Dan read to us from a page of quotations from Christ, Alfred North Whitehead, and D. Callahan, a writer new to me ("For to choose is to engender opposition, to create new situations and to shape a new, even if partial world.") After the reading, we separated into groups of four or five for a period of discussion. I found myself with one of the guitar players, who turned out to be an ex-monk from the East Coast, Mary Thomas, the white wife of the black ex-seminarian, who was holding their infant child in her lap, and

another former seminarian. While we were introducing ourselves, Mary Thomas laughed and said, "I didn't *leave* the convent. I was thrown out." She was a thin girl with an intense face and a high-spirited manner. We talked for ten minutes or so about the selections Dan had read, and decided that security is an illusion and that there is virtue in embracing insecurity.

As the discussion went on, I found I was becoming aware of a sense of *déjà vu*, and then it came to me suddenly: I was being carried back in memory to the sunny afternoon I'd spent at the Human Be-in in Golden Gate Park. Joy-in-life had been the message then as it was now. Then, and later, I wondered to what extent the problems to which my fellow-communicants at the free liturgy were responding were problems related to their Catholicism (or ex-Catholicism, depending on the case) and to what extent they grew out of the California situation. Clearly, the problem within the church is a general one, for the Northern European clergy appears to be as much in rebellion as the California clergy, but the form the rebellion took here was surely indigenous.

After we had reassembled around the altar, Dan tried to stimulate a general discussion, but it went haltingly. At last, looking rather impatient, he brought the discussion to an end, slipped into a homemade vestment that seemed to have been run up out of natural-colored sacking and green velveteen trim, and announced that we were going to celebrate the Eucharist. We prayed with our eyes open and our heads high and sang and ate great chunks of crusty Italian bread that circulated in a wicker basket and drank California port from a chalice.

Afterwards we sang about freedom and joy. Everybody kissed or shook hands with his neighbor and wished him peace. The guitar players broke into an Israeli dance tune, and a couple of the girls in the congregation clapped and danced. It seemed to me that there *was* joy.

While I was having a cup of coffee afterwards, the black ex-

seminarian, Bob Thomas, suggested that I drop in at his mother's house that afternoon. I said I'd be glad to.

The official propaganda about California, and particularly about Southern California, has it that this is where it's at, baby, this is where people swing and things happen. This may be true along the surfing beaches and in the palaces of hard rock, but it is most triumphantly untrue when it comes to the religious establishment. The forty people at Dan Delaney's free mass have to be considered against a background of 1.7 million communicants who worship in the two hundred fifty parishes of what has traditionally been the most conservative, unyielding, and monolithic archdiocese in the country.

It is tempting to attribute the intransigence of the church in Los Angeles to the personality of His Eminence James Francis Aloysius Cardinal McIntyre, who, until his retirement in January 1970, was generally recognized as the most tradition-bound archbishop in the country. Whatever the innovations seen elsewhere since Vatican II — whether in matters of ecumenism, involvement in social issues, priestly celibacy, liturgical changes, or attitudes toward birth control — the Los Angeles diocese under Cardinal McIntyre showed no friendliness toward change.

"It's more of an ecological thing," I was told by Sister Helen Kelley, president of Immaculate Heart College, whose order was then engaged in one of its well-publicized encounters with the cardinal and his chancery. Emil J. Seliga, vice-president of the Los Angeles Association of Laymen, which is committed to the social relevance of the church, described relations with the hierarchy as "cool" and went on, with a touch of astringency, to say, "We've made several attempts to open a dialogue with the chancery, but we haven't received any invitations from His Eminence." Dan Delaney was inclined to view McIntyre as a prince of the church who had been left so far behind by changes in the world as to make himself virtually irrelevant. He added that the social thinking

of the church could be measured by the fact that at that time (it was 1969), five years after Vatican II and three years after the Watts riots, there was only one black priest in Los Angeles — and he was described as a rather retiring man in his sixties.

The cardinal's *Weltanschauung* placed him regularly on the unenlightened side of virtually every important issue facing the church. On celibacy, for instance, McIntyre pulled the rug out from under Notre Dame's fund raising drive in California when the president of that institution declined to honor the cardinal's request that a proposed conference on priestly celibacy be barred from the campus. Birth control, so far as I could discover, has never been allowed to become a public issue in the cardinal's archdiocese, but has been confined to the consciences of discreet Catholic couples. In the matter of the social concern of the church, the most publicized incident concerned the young priest William Henry DuBay, who was moved to write Pope Paul VI requesting that McIntyre be removed from office for his failure to exercise moral leadership among the white Catholics of Los Angeles in matters of racial discrimination. Father DuBay was thereupon suspended as chaplain of St. John's Hospital and forbidden to celebrate mass. (After breaking with the church, DuBay became associated with Synanon; he also organized the now defunct American Federation of Priests and an employment agency for former priests.)

One of the most interesting of Cardinal McIntyre's crusades to keep the world from changing was the endemic guerrilla warfare he carried on with the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. It was a confrontation which threw into clear focus the struggle between the new ways of the church and the old. And, in the true California style, the confrontation became more polarized here, with the antagonists farther apart than they would be found elsewhere. The running argument between the sisters and the cardinal was to end with the announcement in February 1970, a month after the cardi-

nal's retirement, that three hundred fifty members of the order would ask to be relieved of their vows in order to form a secular, thought still Catholic, community to continue their widely varied activities. As Sister Anita Caspary, the head of the order, put it, "We don't like to sign out, but there's nothing we can do about it."

The differences that were most readily apparent between the Immaculate Heart sisters and nuns of more conventional orders were probably the least important, and yet they are worthy of attention. I became aware of one of these differences by accident when, having lost my way on the campus of their colleges, I asked directions of an attractive young woman in a spring dress. It wasn't until I had been set straight and was on my way that I did a classic double take and said to myself, Good God, that was a nun!

Clothing is not an irrelevance. I was amused by the contrast in personal style between Sister Helen Kelley, the president of the college, and Sister Mary Mark Zeyen, the vice-president. Sister Helen Kelley, who has a Ph.D. in literature from Stanford (should I now, I wonder, call her Dr. Kelley?), was a woman who puts on in the morning whatever is most conveniently at hand, runs a comb through her functionally cut straight gray hair, and thanks God that nobody expects her to be a fashion plate. By contrast, Sister Mary Mark, who is also a Ph.D. as well as a pianist of professional stature, was crisp and feminine in a neat black dress that slipped modestly above her nylonned knees when she sat down. Her eyeglasses were set in a stylish frame and her hair was done briskly and attractively.

"Most of us try to dress appropriately for our jobs and age but we don't have as many changes of clothing as most women do," Sister Mary Mark told me. "We still have the three vows, you know — poverty, chastity, and obedience. A good many of us are wearing secondhand clothes — they aren't quite good enough for our friends but they're good enough for us."

Even Sister Helen Kelley, who confessed to having been in favor of keeping the traditional habit out of sheer laziness, admitted that the change involved more than surface appearance. "I found that until I took off the habit I couldn't call anybody, even a student, by her first name," she told me.

The matter of dress was in fact one of the main issues that brought the order into direct conflict with the cardinal. The other, and more substantive, issues had to do with a general revision of the sisters' way of life in line with the recommendations of Vatican II, and the withdrawal of some teaching sisters from the Catholic schools of the archdiocese. Eventually these conflicts were to lead to the decision to go secular.

When I asked Sister Mary Mark about the changes that had been going on in the life-style of the sisters, she said, "When I joined the order, we had to ask permission to take a bath. Well, I don't remember anybody ever being refused permission, but my goodness!" She laughed and went on, "We don't even have required mass anymore. If it's ridiculous to get up at five-thirty in the morning, it's simply ridiculous. Perhaps you've been at a rehearsal until one. Now, you can go to any mass you want — and, in fact, nobody knows if you've gone or not. Besides that, we no longer require a half-hour meditation before and after mass."

The school issue became thoroughly confused when newspaper reports gave the impression that either the sisters had walked out en masse from the schools as a gesture of defiance or that the cardinal had fired them en masse as a punishment for their untraditional ways. In fact, there may have been something there both of defiance and of punishment, but more striking was the lack of sympathy and communication that was shown to exist between the sisters and the cardinal. Responsible to Rome rather than to the cardinal, the sisters could on their own initiative take some of their underqualified members out of the schools and send them back to college to finish their preparation; they could trade their habits for suits and dresses; they could drop their religious names in favor of

their family names; they could change the ancient rules of communal life and widen their spectrum of activities far beyond teaching and nursing. Cardinal McIntyre was informed "as a courtesy." The chancery's reaction was predictable: the next year, no Immaculate Heart sisters taught in the Catholic schools of the archdiocese.

Instead, the sisters taught in the public schools, where they were accepted simply as Miss McGinnis or Miss Gomez. They engaged in social work for both private and public agencies. They worked in the antipoverty program. One of them ran a halfway house for delinquent girls in East Los Angeles, one of the ghetto areas. One became a full-time writer of textbooks. Another was a full-time cellist, playing with symphony orchestras.

Besides these activities, the sisters continued to own and operate Immaculate Heart College in Hollywood, which Sister Mary Mark described to me as "the crown of the educational end of things." Founded in 1916 as a liberal arts college for girls, Immaculate Heart has come a long way from the cliché of a convent school at which the sweet young things are protected from the profane world and from assaults on their faith. I found Sister Helen Kelley calmly preparing to fend off protests about a play the girls had put on which contained some four-letter words and some attitudes that a conservative Catholic might consider blasphemous. "Actually, we don't think of ourselves as breaking away in any substantive way from traditional Catholicism," she told me. "But IHC is a place in which the Christian attitude toward people is openly expressed — a non-judgmental attitude, more tolerant and more joyful."

Immaculate Heart College has made itself particularly notable in education in the arts. Until a little over a year ago, Sister Mary Corita Kent of the art department was IHC's brightest star, largely because of her experiments in pop art and in advertising art, which at that time seemed to be peculiar activities for a nun. In the fall of 1968 Sister Mary Corita

became plain Corita Kent because, as she explained, she had to do her own thing — thus anticipating the move that was to be made a little over a year later by the entire community.

Ironically, when the break came, it was not with Cardinal McIntyre that the sisters had to cope but with his successor, Archbishop Timothy Manning, a man of considerably more liberal persuasion than the cardinal. The vote to secularize themselves was forced by the ruling of a Vatican committee that the sisters had gone too far in their experimental ways and must fall back and regroup. Even though Cardinal McIntyre's retirement seemed to open room for compromise, they decided that too much water had gone over the dam, and prepared to reorganize themselves as the Immaculate Heart Community. Archbishop Manning assured them that Rome would act favorably on their request for dispensation. It was said that this was the first time in the history of the church that such a large group of nuns had left the church with the plan of remaining a united community.

A conservative estimate has it that in 1968 Catholic priests in this country were resigning from their parishes or administrative posts at the rate of about fifty a month. A more liberal estimate, by the *National Catholic Reporter*, an organ of dissent, is that as many as twenty-seven hundred men left the priesthood in 1968.

For the priests and nuns involved, whether or not they retain their faith and their connection with the church, the processes of leaving the rectory and the convent are calculated to instill guilt and self-doubt just at a time when confidence is most desperately needed. Priests who leave their ministry in order to marry are urged to depart from the diocese in order not to create a scandal among their former parishioners. Often intelligent and well-educated, they embark on a new career in a strange city without any clear idea of what they can do and at a time when they are suffering from the unhealed psychic wounds caused by their parting. As I

was to find out, many troubled ex-priests and ex-nuns, like troubled citizens generally, tend to head for California to start their new lives.

Wondering what happened to these refugees, I went to an organization called Transitional Resources Incorporated, which from an office building on Wilshire Boulevard in Los Angeles helps former priests and nuns adjust to the working world. Conceived by Robert G. Dease, the owner of a career-counseling service for executives, TRI is made up of lay volunteers who are in a position to help these "formers" find jobs.

At one of TRI's regular Tuesday night meetings, I found in attendance ten former priests, a former Protestant minister, an Immaculate Heart sister who had brought along an ex-nun friend from the East, and another nun in civilian clothes who was planning to leave her teaching post and her convent at the end of the school year. With the exception of three men in business suits, the men were wearing sweaters and slacks. The women, neatly and attractively dressed, might have been lay school teachers. (Both here and at Immaculate Heart College I was struck by a curious phenomenon. The nuns and ex-nuns I met looked five or ten years younger than their calendar ages. Is this a reflection of a life of abstinence, or are these women late bloomers in more than one sense?)

The meeting took place around a large conference table with two reports of jobs or job prospects. An ex-priest who had been making do with a job selling sporting goods in a department store had been offered an executive position in the antipoverty program. (I was reminded that Sargent Shriver was once reported to have remarked that OEO really stood for the Office of Ecclesiastical Outcasts.) The former Protestant minister told us that he had been invited to an interview by an aircraft company, and the group discussed his best strategy at the interview. The main discussion, however, centered around a more difficult case, that of the ex-nun from the East, a slender, girlish woman. She was visibly discour-

aged as she told us how, with a Ph.D. in literature, she was both overeducated and underqualified for all the jobs for which she had applied. She began to cheer up when members of the group told her that her troubles were much like some of their own, and went on to suggest various job opportunities she hadn't thought about.

The *pièce de résistance* of the evening was the personal story of Ed Vitek, who, though not a member of the TRI group, had been invited to share his experiences with them. A prosperous-looking blond man of about forty, wearing a glen plaid suit, a striped shirt, a solid-color dark tie with a pearl tie tack, and Italian style black loafers, Mr. Vitek told us that he had been ordained a priest of the Redemptorist order when he was twenty-five. "I was a parish priest in the East," he said, "until I began to have doubts and to ask myself, Is this my life? Am I using my life as effectively as I should? I went to my superiors and managed to take a sort of leave of absence by becoming an army chaplain."

Mr. Vitek's army career reinforced his conviction that the priestly life was not the life for him. He quit the army and the Redemptorists and started driving West, pulling a six-hundred-dollar trailer he had bought with his savings. He stopped en route to offer his condolences to a recently widowed young mother in Ohio. A few months later she became Mrs. Vitek.

"When I got to LA I began looking for a job," Mr. Vitek went on. "I thought that maybe with the sort of background we all have, the thing to do was to go into sales. I was offered a job with one of the big book publishers, selling books to Catholic agencies. It paid about nine thousand dollars, with an expense account and a ceiling on the job of about twenty thousand. I was sort of innocent, I guess, but I figured that I could do better than that. I turned the job down, answered an ad in the paper and found myself selling door-to-door — a real schlock operation.

"Then one day I decided it was time to convert my GI

insurance policy, and I went to my wife's agent. After we got talking, he tried to sell me the idea of going into insurance myself. I wasn't tempted at first, but after we became personal friends he convinced me that I had the wrong idea about insurance, that it's really a professional thing. The first year selling insurance I made about twelve thousand dollars. This year I'm number seven or eight of all the salesmen in the firm and I hear I'm going to be put up for Salesman of the Year. Insurance is absolutely incredible, absolutely fantastic. You have no idea of the possibilities."

The others around the table seemed overwhelmed by Mr. Vitek's success story. An older man asked how one overcomes shyness. He said he himself had felt uncomfortable even when taking census in his parish. Mr. Vitek laughed and said sometimes his legs still wobbled but you just kept on trying. Nine prospects said "No" but then the tenth said "Yes," and you began to develop confidence.

About a week later, I visited Mr. and Mrs. Vitek at their home in La Crescenta. The house turned out to be a spacious upper-middle sort of place, with an acre of wall-to-wall carpeting. Mrs. Vitek, a slight, dark-haired attractive woman, served coffee and sat down with us while we talked about some of the problems of being a former priest.

The Viteks were quick to assure me that they were Catholics in good standing, with their marriage recognized and the family attending mass regularly. (There is a procedure, requiring application to Rome, which permits a priest to leave his pulpit in order to marry and yet remain within the church.) The Vitek children went to public schools but also attended catechism class. When I asked Mr. Vitek whether he identified himself publicly as an ex-priest, he shrugged and said, "If it comes up in conversation, I talk about it. If it doesn't come up, I don't."

His enthusiasm was clearly for his new career. An articulate and personable man, he had no doubt that he had found

his real life's work. "I'm confident," he said. "I have this feeling. I know I'm going to be something big in business."

As we parted, he said quietly, "You know, sometimes it's hard for me even to think about having been a priest."

Ed Vitek, with his self-confidence and his demonstrated aptitude for worldly success, is an unusual ex-priest. He is, however, a thorough Californian with his drive for the success that means a large and well-furnished house in La Crescenta — and yet a house that struck me, as so many other California houses have, as a cold place for the spirit. I found myself much more at ease with the rebels I had met at Dan Delaney's free liturgy — rebels who, at the other end of the spectrum, are just as Californian as Ed Vitek.

The party that Bob Thomas gave at his mother's house on Sunday afternoon turned out to be not precisely like any other social occasion I have ever attended. The house was a comfortable, cheerful place full both of Bob's family (from Panama, they ran from very black to colonial Spanish in color) and of several couples whom I'd met at the morning service. There was Dan Delaney and Chris, a young ex-monk named Tom with his lovely, dark-haired wife, another ex-priest with his wife, and of course Bob and Mary Thomas. We sat in the living room drinking vodka or whiskey while the women of the house prepared a barbecue in the backyard.

The conversation revolved largely about the common condition of having left the religious life. When I asked Bob Thomas, who is quite black of skin, about the scarcity of black priests in Los Angeles, he laughed and said, "Oh, when I was in seminary, I was going to be their glorious boy, but I decided before I was ordained that the priesthood wasn't relevant. Sure, the celibacy issue was part of it, too. I came around to feeling I had to use my manhood in the service of God." Bob became, instead, a probation officer for Los Angeles County. At the time of the party he was on leave, organizing the probation officers for collective bargaining.

There was a clear difference of opinion between Dan and

the ex-monk, Tom, who confessed that he still felt guilty about the pain he had caused his family and was wondering if he shouldn't apply to the chancery to begin the process leading to official laicization and a recognition of his marriage. Dan shook his head and said, "The hell with the chancery. Who cares about *them*?" Tom, however, still looked reflective.

When I asked if any of them had ever thought of changing from the Roman Catholic priesthood to, say, the Episcopal priesthood, they shook their heads as Dan laughed and said, "Hah! Why should I change one prison for another?" I asked him how he felt about Cardinal McIntyre's successor, Archbishop Manning. "Hah!" he snorted. "Well, I suppose a man with one leg is better than a man with no legs at all."

The barbecue was ready, and we went out into the backyard and ate ribs and hamburgers and beans and salad and drank beer or red wine. It was a soft spring evening, and there was much general talk, joking, and laughter. We were all a little elevated, both by alcohol and by the spirit of the occasion, and I remember pleasantly that when I left I was kissed goodbye by two of the former nuns.

34. *Mrs. Carroll*

Because Tiburon is a quiet place after dark, I remember the night voices with a particular clarity. I don't mean just the voices from parties that have gone on too long, but the cries that have woken me up in the middle of the night: a wife screaming that she can no longer stand it; two male voices, one high and one low, shouting unintelligibly at each other at four in the morning; a halloo from the straits, a cry for help

from a sailor out late at night in an adverse tide, with no wind and a dead engine.

Once when we heard somebody calling for help from the straits, a Coast Guard patrol boat came and raked the water with its lights. The cries stopped and we went to bed, sure that a rescue had been made. But, as it turned out, the shouts we had heard had been made by a man who had fallen from his boat and been carried up the straits on a fast-flooding current. He was a good swimmer but he had finally gone under somewhere beyond the Coast Guardsmen's floodlights.

Our nearest neighboring houses to the east are two duplex units, each consisting of two apartments side by side. They are finished in brown shingle and stand on a steep slope, their balconies looking out over the houses on the lower road and onto the straits. They are, I imagine, quite expensive and the renters seem to run to pairs of young women whom I believe to be airline stewardesses. Since we are served by a different road, I never see these people except at a distance, and if my life depended on it I couldn't pick them out from all the other anonymous newcomers in town.

I became aware that there was a couple who were most clearly not airline stewardesses living in the nearest apartment only because Mrs. Carroll — whose name I found out by accident from the United Parcel Service man — carried on a dialogue with the night. At two or three or four she would emerge on her balcony and cry and sob and hurl recriminations into the darkness over the straits. Usually I would listen drowsily for a while and then go back to sleep.

On one Saturday afternoon, while lounging on the deck, I used my binoculars discreetly. Mrs. Carroll turned out to be a tall, handsome woman of fifty-five or sixty. Her companion was a somewhat younger man who apparently shared the apartment but whose precise function I never found out. During the course of the afternoon, they moved on and off the balcony, drinking glasses always in their hands.

One night the Coast Guardsmen came back, this time look-

ing for three men who had escaped from Alcatraz by swimming away, a desperate venture. Nikki and I watched the boat for a while from the deck of our house as it worked back and forth across Raccoon Strait, between Angel Island and the shore, its lights making two spots on the dark water. The boat was there when we went to bed.

Some hours later I was awakened by Mrs. Carroll's voice, and this time the clearness of her words and the urgency and bitterness of her voice moved me to get up and go to the window. The patrol boat was still there, still working its way back and forth across the straits. Mrs. Carroll was standing at the railing of her balcony, shouting at the men on the boat: "I hope they get away, oh, I hope they get away from you, you sons of bitches! I hope they make it, I hope they make it, I hope they get away from you, you goddamn dirty cops!" Her voice went on and on and on.

There was a moon and I could make out two figures on the balcony. Mrs. Carroll's man companion — husband, lover, friend, I don't know — was tugging at her arm. "Let go of me! Let me go!" she cried, striking wildly at him until he let go her arm. Then she turned back to the water, shouting victoriously, "You won't get them! Oh, no, you won't get them! They're going to get away, you stupid cops! You're not going to get them at all!"

Seven. Thanatos
Triumphant

We must remember that ours is a situation in which no people ever found themselves before: A large country is coming in a generation, and its name is California. We are being born full-grown. I pray that we are born with idealism. It is for us that the bell tolls.

— Roger Revelle

The rush to California . . . and the attitude, not merely of merchants, but of philosophers, so called, in relation to it, reflect the greatest disgrace on mankind.

— Thoreau

California is a land of sepulchral visions; it calls up nightmares of human degeneration and extinction.

— Wilson Carey McWilliams

To be sure, there is pervasive unhappiness, and the happy consciousness is shaky enough — a thin surface over fear, frustration, and disgust. This unhappiness lends itself easily to political mobilization; without room for conscious development, it may become the instinctive reservoir for a new fascist way of life and death.

— Herbert Marcuse

On Santa Rosa Island, off the coast of Southern California, the roasted bones of a dwarf race of the extinct mammoth have been found associated with what is thought to be an early campfire.

— Raymond Dasmann

35. *Our First Parafascist State II*

It has taken me close to twenty years and God knows how many encounters and re-encounters with the reality of California as well as some pain and some joy to come to the obvious conclusion. Twenty years ago, California was indeed a Promised Land that seemed to hold so many bright promises for the future. The single central point of this book has been the increasing strength of my conviction that since about 1965 we have been going through a revolution that has been closing off our alternatives. The world keeps waiting to see in which direction California will go. In fact, it has already gone. California is a disaster.

I have, I imagine, disappointed some of my readers by neglecting to devote more of my energies to exposing the wickednesses of such political mutants as Ronald Reagan. This is not because I underrate their importance. I read in the paper today that if Mr. Nixon manages, politically speaking, to fall flat on his face, Mr. Reagan may well become the new Moses for the Republican faithful. I honor this prophecy and I tremble for the republic.

Nor have I neglected our leaders because of a lack of material testifying to their willingness to use their powers in anti-democratic ways. The material is there. Recall Mr. Reagan's "bloodbath," for example, and recall that in the spring of 1970, Charles Foley, of the London *Observer*, hardly an organ of the radical left, filed a story that began, "A startling plan to 'forestall revolution' in America is being drawn up by California Governor Ronald Reagan's advisers and has already been condemned by one critic inside the administration as 'a blueprint for a police state.'"

Mr. Foley went on to describe how Mr. Reagan's Task Force on Riots and Disorders has been funded largely by federal money and based operationally on the tactics developed by the British during the suppression of the Communist revolt in Malaya. The ways and means, according to Mr. Foley, include electronic surveillance, more vigorous work by undercover agents, "mathematical probability models that will predict the time and place of future trouble," and the use of computerized national data banks stuffed with personalia about millions of citizens.

Rather than being kept secret, Mr. Foley reported, the plan would be unveiled as a grandstand tactic in the next election, on the theory that a majority of the voters would welcome it. If this did not happen in the fall of 1970 it was probably for the good reason that Mr. Reagan had the election securely in his pocket long before the first Tuesday in November.

In the course of this book I have not given much attention to Mr. Reagan's performance in the day-to-day business of running a state. Here his record is dismal, although it does not seem to have discouraged his supporters. Elected on an economy platform ("Nothing is more important than economy in government"), he has enthusiastically attacked the financial resources available for mental health, welfare, and education; yet the cost of running California has continued to rise under his administration. He has promised tax relief to the property owner and at the same time has raised the income tax to levels that are truly burdensome. (Before Reagan, the state tax was only a minor nuisance. Last year my state income tax was larger than the already confiscatory property tax for my house and lot.) Everybody is suffering under this sort of economy except the oil companies, whose owners were among the governor's original supporters.

A public accounting of sorts took place at the end of 1970, when Mr. Reagan called together two hundred fifty department heads of the state government as well as a regiment of reporters and TV people in order to announce that California

had simply run out of money. The governor told the bureaucrats that they would have to cut and squeeze and trim once again, directing their attention particularly to welfare and MediCal costs, which, he told them, threatened to bankrupt the state.

An expert appraisal of Ronald Reagan as governor was made recently by his predecessor, Pat Brown, and, although Mr. Brown can hardly be accused of objectivity, he is a canny political observer. Playing the part of schoolteacher, Mr. Brown submitted the following report card on the first Reagan administration:

Status of the individual — C—
Democratic process — a charitable D
Education — an emphatic F
Economic growth — F
Technological change — D—
Agriculture — C
Living conditions — an unqualified F
Health and welfare — a very big F

Mr. Brown went on to observe that Governor Reagan “just doesn’t like government . . . that makes as much sense to me as placing a church under the supervision of an atheist.” *

My message, however, has little to do with party politics. My thesis is that the style of life I have called parafascist is prevailing here not because we Californians have been the

* Speaking of people who don’t like government, I am reminded that I have not found any occasion to mention California’s former senator George Murphy. In spite of his affable personality and his conventional right-wing posture, Senator Murphy was virtually nonexistent as a political force. A fair example of his intellectual fiber was presented during the 1970 campaign when he told an audience that the Supreme Court should be allowed to “change the Constitution” only by a two-thirds vote. When reporters asked him for an example of the court’s “changing the Constitution,” he replied, “I don’t know; go look it up.” Murphy was defeated by his own sad showing in explaining his financial relations with Technicolor and by a young, vigorous, and attractive opponent, John V. Tunney, who spent a great deal of money in order to defeat him.

unwilling victims of strong and evil leaders, but rather — and worse — it is prevailing because we have become accomplices in a process in which the quality of our lives, private as well as public, has been allowed to disintegrate in a direction that is moving us increasingly far from the traditional American norms. Parafascism is less a disease of society than of the individual, less a case of public pathology than a case of private pathology. If, instead of Ronald Reagan, we had Jess Unruh or Robert Finch in the governor's mansion, things would probably be much the same.* We, the victims, are also the criminals, and the variety of fascism we are in the midst of creating reflects our unhappiness, our guilt, and our fear.

As in all cases of genuine psychopathology, the causes of our distress are more hidden than they are apparent. As we have noted, the students who pursued the cause of the People's Park with such passion turned away from more appropriate causes in a seemingly unaccountable fashion. Why did they not instead direct their energy and their idealism against the radiation laboratory up the hill from the campus, a laboratory which symbolizes the function of their university as the world's foremost manufacturer of nuclear armaments? Why did they not march on University Hall to protest the substantial and continuing support of the university by the Atomic Energy Commission, the army, the navy, and the air force?

They didn't, I think, because like the rest of us Californians, even the militant students find it hard to stand face-to-face with our dirty secret. Our dirty secret is that we Californians not only depend for our livelihoods on the manufacture of weapons but also that we grow fat from the trade. It is surely overstating the matter, but not beyond the bounds of poetic license, to borrow from George Orwell and argue that the Good Life is supported by the blood of Indochinese peasants.

* Mr. Finch's unhappy career in Washington should not have been a surprise, fitting as it did so neatly into the California liberal's predilection for style rather than substance.

If peace were really to break out, California would be turned into an economic desert. About a third of our employed workers would be laid off at firms manufacturing military hardware and other war-related goods, and this in a *state* whose gross national product places it fifth among the *countries* of the world.*

The argument is implicit in the statistics. California, which has 10 per cent of the population of the United States, produces 46 per cent of the national production of missiles and space systems; 44 per cent of military building supplies; 33 per cent of military research and development; 27 per cent of petroleum products for the Department of Defense; 23 per cent of military subsistence items; 21 per cent of military electronics and communications gear; 20 per cent of military construction work and 20 per cent of military administrative services. As Martin Gellen wrote in concluding an article on California's war economy, "You name it — and California will kill it." (Or, as Richard Nixon said after the 1962 election, "A lot of defense contracts have come into California and other areas. I'm not complaining about it." Collectors of Nixoniana will recognize this as part of the "You won't have Nixon to kick around anymore" speech.)

It is not accidental that in our private lives as well as in our public life we prefer to ignore this one great source of our prosperity. Just as the repression of unpleasant facets of reality contributes to the development of neurotic patterns of behavior in the individual, so our collective psyche has been warped and twisted by this unvoiced conspiracy to repress this central fact of economic reality. We are this country's garrison state, a killer state, and the guilty knowledge is helping to drive us mad.

What I have recorded in this book adds up in the end not

* In order of importance, the great California munitions makers are Lockheed, General Dynamics, McDonnell-Douglas, Hughes Aircraft, North American Rockwell, Aerojet-General. For all its eminence, Lockheed is, as I write, trembling on the edge of disaster, and General Dynamics is in trouble.

to a lawyer's brief but to a series of personal depositions about what has happened to me here. The larger parts of this book have been concerned with the young, with the state of the universities, with the conditions of upper-middle life, and with some new directions being taken by the clergy. If there is a common thread running through these experiences, it is the thesis that in California the traditional social institutions have been falling apart more rapidly than they have been decaying elsewhere. What is different in California is that we have rounded the corner and are embarked on a process of reconstruction in a direction that I find exceedingly disturbing.

Let us pursue for a moment the theme of institutional decay. The greatest irony of the parafascist revolution is that its success has paralleled the decreasing influence of those ancient institutions that have often been charged with being backward-looking and restrictive of true democracy. I mean such institutions as the great urban political machines, the churches, and the universities in their capacity as vocational schools for the executive suite. I am not a great admirer of Tammany Hall (I am speaking figuratively), but I am coming around to the notion that Tammany performs a useful and possibly irreplaceable function, for it has served to ensure that the political game is played by professional politicians. Tammany may be corrupt and crooked, but it is also committed to reality, to the art of the possible, and to the arts of persuasion and compromise. If Tammany had existed in California (I speak, remember, figuratively), Ronald Reagan would still be remembered principally for *King's Row*. Mr. Reagan knows this, and in the 1970 campaign accused his Democratic opponents of the dreadful crime of being "career politicians." (A suspicion of professional politicians has been the hallmark of all fascist movements — most recently of the Greek colonels.)

As a number of political commentators observed, when Mr. Reagan ran for governor in 1966 he came to the voters unfettered by a political organization, reaching them directly

through the television tube. It is an important observation, for the same process can be seen in other areas of human activity in California. To take one example, the marathon therapy experience was devised to short-circuit such time-, energy-, or money-consuming alternatives as traditional psychotherapy or meditation and introspection. Personal salvation, like political salvation, must be instant.

My personal sympathy is with Dan Delaney and his friends and with the ex-Sisters of the Sacred Heart rather than with their archbishop and the awesome machinery of his church. I could view the imminent disappearance of the churches with equanimity so far as my personal life goes. Still, I am troubled by the prospect of a world in which the organized churches, obnoxious as they are, will have been fragmented into ten thousand storefront congregations.

I also find myself painfully torn by what has been going on in the universities in California. On the one hand I am distressed by the phenomenon of politicalization, which sees the Reagan administration and its tame regents laying an increasingly direct hand on the internal affairs of the campuses. On the other hand I am disturbed by the tendency of the militant students to drive the universities in the directions pointed to by their "free" universities, and I am made uncomfortable by the schools of ethnic studies. (I once listened to a representative of a black students' union explain with great self-confidence that because Pythagoras was a black man, schools should offer black mathematics. Well, yes, but . . .) The traditional university, even such an ungainly, unwieldy, and elephantine institution as the University of California, performs a function that is just possibly vital to preserving some of the characteristics of democracy that are worth preserving.

There is still one more institution that traditionally has acted as a barrier to the growth of totalitarianism, and that is the labor movement. The labor unions have a long and honorable history in California, a history that in Northern Cali-

fornia has created martyrs amidst violence and bloodshed in the fields and along the waterfront.

Times have changed. For a year, I was president of a local of the AFL-CIO teachers union, but since leaving teaching and dropping out of the union, I have found little in the unions that I can feel involved with. Only Cesar Chavez and his Farm Workers Union seem to carry on the old traditions — and do so against opposition from within the labor unions themselves.

What has happened in the unions is symbolized by the case of Harry Bridges, the king of the sailors and longshoremen. For decades, Mr. Bridges was the terror of the shipping industry and apparently was a grave menace to the entire nation, for the government persistently, though unsuccessfully, tried to deport him to his native Australia for allegedly being a Communist. (Mr. Bridges, who has a pleasant sense of humor, registered as a Republican.) Now, there is peace along the waterfront, a prosperous contract was long ago negotiated with the employers, and Harry Bridges himself has been officially accepted as an elder statesman. The one-time terror of the shipping industry is now a member of the port authority.

This is all good and honorable and in the American grain, but the taming of the unions has had the effect of removing one more line of resistance. Indeed, many union members have moved actively to the other side, identifying their own prosperity with the prosperity of the weapons industry, their political views with the views of the Sacramento government, and their social outlook with the outlook of the police at Isla Vista.

Precisely the right note was struck on Labor Day 1970 by Al Clem, international vice president of the Operating Engineers Union, and co-chairman of the Labor for Reagan committee. Saying, "We know the Governor has done a good job in trying to keep law and order," Mr. Clem went on to report that he had suggested to the governor that more federal

money be made available so that hard-hat construction workers could get more jobs.

"When we went to the governor and asked him to use his good offices, the governor did just what we asked him to," Mr. Clem said.

In the midst of this decay, I have sometimes allowed myself to fall victim to the pleasant illusion that the young people are, indeed, in the process of building up a new and better world, having speeded up the process of death and regeneration by doing their best to tear the old world down. Something close to this proposition has been argued by Theodore Roszak in *The Making of a Counter Culture*, a book which has had considerable influence even among people who have not read it. Mr. Roszak's argument is summed up in his preface:

"... the counter culture, far more than merely 'meriting' attention, desperately requires it, since I am at a loss to know where, besides among these dissenting young people and their heirs of the next few generations, the radical discontent and innovation can be found that might transform this disoriented civilization of ours into something a human being can identify as home. They are the matrix in which an alternative, but still excessively fragile future is taking shape. Granted that alternative comes dressed in a garish motley, its costume borrowed from many and exotic sources — from depth psychiatry, from the mellowed remnants of left-wing ideology, from the oriental religions, from Romantic *Weltschmerz*, from anarchist social theory, from Dada and American Indian lore, and, I suppose, the perennial wisdom. Still it looks to me like all we have to hold against the final consolidation of a technocratic totalitarianism in which we shall find ourselves ingeniously adapted to an existence wholly estranged from everything that has ever made the life of man an interesting adventure."

I have quoted Mr. Roszak at such length not only because he is speaking to my point and because I agree with much of

what he has to say, but also because I think it is important to distinguish what he has really said from what wishful readers and non-readers imagine him to have said. I have had his argument presented to me as saying that the counter culture of the disaffiliated young is in fact triumphing and that Ronald Reagan and General Nurre and Sam Yorty and Sheriff Madigan and all the other cave dwellers and bully boys had better look to their defenses, for their government is about to come down like the statue of Ozymandias. But read that last sentence again: "Still it looks to me like all we have to hold against the final consolidation of a technocratic totalitarianism in which we shall find ourselves ingeniously adapted to an existence wholly estranged from everything that has ever made the life of man an interesting adventure."

And this, I think, is precisely it. The only quarrel I have with Mr. Roszak is one of temperament: he is an optimist and I am a pessimist. He sees the counter culture as our final defense, and I see it as no defense at all. He calls the alternative technocratic totalitarianism, while I call it parafascism. Clearly, we mean much the same thing. (I might add that while Mr. Roszak is writing about the country as a whole, his point of vantage is the state college at Hayward, across the bay from San Francisco.)

Once we have abandoned the hope that our children will save us from the consequences of our own folly, there is not much left to be cheerful about.*

It would be a mistake to suggest that the parafascist revolution is exclusively a California phenomenon. But, just as the rebellion of the college-age youth first made itself known in California, so has its converse. In both cases, California's preeminence springs from the same well-known observation: California is peopled by immigrants who left their traditions

* An entirely different view of the matter has been taken by Charles Reich in his recent, best-selling book, *The Greening of America*, whose message appears to be that we *will* be saved by our children. There is a good deal in Mr. Reich's book to admire, but not its romantic, sentimental optimism.

on the eastern side of the Sierra Nevada. What native traditions we do have are largely technological rather than humane. Our thought, such as it is, revolves around the superficial comedy of acquisition and enjoyment, and rarely touches on our real tragedies. We are a people without a usable past, and the ultimate results are proving to be disastrous.

To recapitulate, then, what I have argued in this book is that the traditional forms of American life have been disintegrating faster in California than they have been elsewhere, and that we are in the midst of a profound reorientation in a new direction. The process of disintegration is visible both in the breakdown of individual morale and in the growing impotence of such institutions as the universities, the churches, the political parties, and the labor unions.

For the individual, life in California is oriented toward leisure rather than toward work that has some meaning for its own sake. Marriage and the family are becoming increasingly insecure. There is a growing familiarity with death — either symbolic death with alcohol and other drugs, or vicarious death through employment in the garrison state, or literal death through suicide. The forces of darkness are breaking through the sunlit surface of California life, announcing their presence by means of such phenomena as the murderous history of the Charles Manson “family” and the brilliant and tragic career of Angela Davis.

In the public sphere, the political parties have virtually disappeared as useful instruments of the processes of government. The most powerful labor unions have become adjuncts of the garrison state. Among the churches, some have attempted to come to grips with the real problems of a largely unchurched population, but at the cost of fragmentation and institutional decay. The universities are on the brink of being destroyed, both by internal turmoil and by the eagerness of political leaders to profit by that turmoil.

Political power in California has fallen into the hands of

men who are not politicians in the customary sense but who have no reluctance to extend their areas of control. They have made their essential orientation clear. It is anti-youth, anti-intellectual, anti-minority, anti-dissent, pro-police, pro-property rights. Their power is cresting.

When I consider the future of California, I see a reconstruction of our collective life that will lead to internal harmony and order but that will make California an impossible place in which to live.

I see, first, the progressive atrophy of such political life as we now enjoy. Choice in the political sphere will become increasingly restricted. Whether the governor is Mr. Reagan or whether he is somebody else will not make much difference. The movement of California's political life will be toward preserving stability at all costs, ultimately at the cost of eroding the Bill of Rights. People will be imprisoned for political reasons, and cause will be found to keep them in prison. Privacy will be invaded to a degree unthinkable twenty years ago. Computerized dossiers will be maintained on all dissenters and potential dissenters. News will be managed and thought will be controlled.

Unless I am much mistaken, the rebellion on the campuses has about run its course. The love generation is certainly gone. The counter culture of the young will be remembered as a brilliant and threatening comet that will not be expected to return. The political ghosts of Mario Savio and Angela Davis will be invoked to legitimize the suppression of whatever mild rebellion raises its head. The next generation will be silent, clever, biddable.

As an educational institution, the University of California has managed to survive in remarkably good shape, testifying to its extraordinary toughness. (In 1970 the Berkeley campus was again rated first in the country for the strength of its graduate faculties.) Yet, if Mr. Reagan is allowed to achieve his goal of transferring more and more of the university's

control to the executive branch, there will eventually be an eastward migration of scholars and a consequent lowering of quality. In any event, education in California seems destined to become increasingly pragmatic, directed toward coping with technical rather than with human problems.

Given our national leadership and the state of the world generally, I do not see much chance that California will be required to plow under its missile factories and napalm plants. Instead we will become increasingly dependent on war as our one-crop economy. The brightest of the new generation of young people will be enlisted in careers in the war industries. They will learn to go willingly.

The relations between the races will worsen rather than become better. The more mobile, middle-class blacks will escape to join their white brethren in the suburbs. Los Angeles, Oakland and San Francisco will become dumping grounds for semiemployable black no-hopers. When civil disturbances occur, they will be stamped out promptly, bringing to bear all the technology of repression that has been perfected to cope with the campus. When blacks and browns are gassed, clubbed, killed by gunfire, and arrested collectively, there will not be as much protest as there was when white students were the victims. Yet the blacks and browns will manage to burn the cities, and great areas that once housed people will be allowed to stand as monuments to death and destruction.

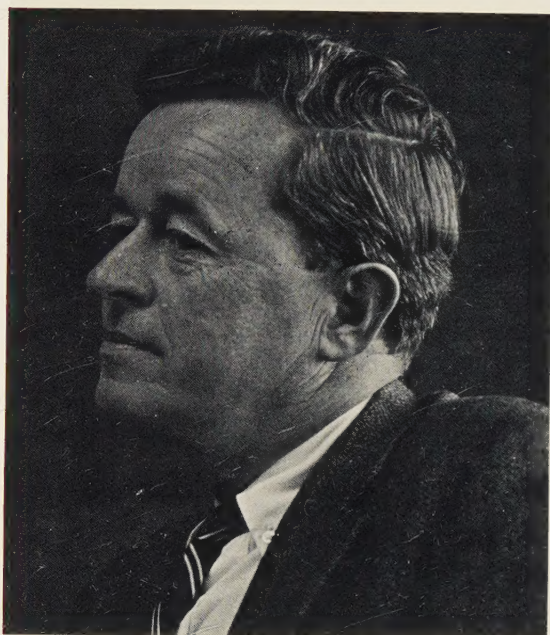
We will welcome this new world, for we ourselves will have made it. We will insist that we are living in the realm of Eros, but the temple we will have built will be occupied by Thanatos. The rhetoric will remain that of the Promised Land, but the reality will be closer to George Orwell's nightmare. We will give away the truth by destroying ourselves literally and symbolically at an increasing rate. Alcohol will remain our principal anesthetic, but marijuana and the less virulent narcotics will be increasingly used in wider circles than they are now. Our madhouses will overflow. There

will be an increasing number of suicides that will be hard to explain on any rational basis.

And so in the end the land that Walt Whitman described as a "flashing and golden pageant" and that Mark Twain called the "Crown Princess of the new dispensation" will indeed become our first parafascist state. As California has gone, so eventually will go the rest of the United States.

Continued from first flap

At People's Park and Isla Vista, at Altamont and San Francisco State, at a love-in, a commune and a new kind of church, *Anti-California* is incisive, infuriating and convincing. An American fascism is afoot and receiving a joyous welcome from the majority of the population. The fate of California signals a distant warning to the remainder of the United States.



Kenneth Lamott grew up in Japan, graduated from Yale University and served in the navy during World War II. His work has appeared in various publications including *The New Yorker*, *Harper's*, *Horizon*, *The Nation* and the *New York Times Magazine*. His previous works include *The Stockade*, *The White Sand of Shirahama* and *The Moneymakers*. Mr. Lamott now lives in Tiburon, California, with his wife and three children, where he spends most of his time as a writer, a novelist and an essayist.

Jacket design by Applebaum and Curtis

Photo by Ken Molino

ANTI-
CALIFORNIA:
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FROM OUR
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